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THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE following pages give the substance of a series of lectures upon the Person and work of the Holy Spirit. They are put before the reader in the hope that, spite of feebleness in presentation, the attention may be drawn to that which is the distinguishing mark of Christianity. It is a sad fact that there is not only an ignorance of this great subject on the part of most of God's people, but an ignoring of it by many who are acquainted with it. It is hoped that some will get the light of the truth, and that others may be stirred afresh to act upon the light they have.

The method of treating the subject has been simply to gather the various scriptures under appropriate heads, and to learn their meaning. Unscriptural views, both as to corporate and individual truth, have been frankly examined and tested by the word of God. It need hardly be said that edification in love, and not controversy, has been the object. The truth of God is for all His people, and not for a select few.

The hymns sung have been added as appropriate to the theme, and thus helpful in fixing the truths presented, while they form a suited expression of the praise that ever follows the heart's appreciation of the things of God.

May that blessed One, the theme of these pages, make use of them for the help and profit of the Lord's beloved people.

S. R.

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LECTURE I

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE DISPENSATIONS:—

BEFORE CHRIST, THE PRESENT AGE, THE MILLENNIUM

* "O LORD, we know it matters not
How sweet the song may be;
No heart but of the Spirit taught
Makes melody to Thee.

Then teach Thy gathered saints, O Lord,
To worship in Thy fear;
And let Thy grace mould ev'ry word
That meets Thy holy ear.

Thou hast by blood made sinners meet,
As saints in light, to come
And worship at the mercy-seat,
Before th' eternal throne.

Thy precious name is all we show,
Our only passport, Lord;
And full assurance now we know,
Confiding in Thy word.

O largely give, 'tis all Thine own,
The Spirit's goodly fruit:
Praise, issuing forth in life, alone
Our living Lord can suit."

IT is interesting to note that there is reference to the Holy Spirit in one of the earliest and one of the last verses in the Bible. In Genesis i. 2, we read, "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters;" and in Revelation xxii. 17, "The Spirit and the Bride say come." The first passage shows us the superintendence of the Spirit in the preparation of the earth for the habitation of man. Typically we see His work in regeneration;—all is

* The hymns are taken from the "Little Flock Hymn Book;" to be had of the Publishers.

waste and desolate, and the Spirit of God moves upon the face of the waters. In Revelation, the Spirit utters the longing with which the Bride, the Church, unites, "Come Lord Jesus." Here the look is onward to the coming of our Lord, and so on through eternity. Thus the Spirit begins the work of God in our souls and carries it on to the time of full fruition, to eternity itself. Can we then overestimate the importance of the subject which is before us at this time — the Person and work of the Holy Spirit?

Strange as it may seem, we are met at the very outset by a question which we must answer before we can take up what is properly before us to-night. Men have asked, "Is there such a person as the Holy Ghost?" Is not all reference to a person in Scripture simply a striking way of referring to the attributes of God? Is not the Spirit simply an all pervading, divine influence?

Now we need not be long detained upon this matter, but we must speak in no uncertain way. This question involves a denial of the very being of God, and therefore must be treated as all other unbelieving questions. God has been pleased to reveal something of the infinite depths of the mystery of His Holy Person to us. He is—in Christianity—revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We must tread softly here, for we are on holy ground. There are depths which we cannot fathom, but we can at least look and wonder, confess and worship. A denial of either of these divine Persons is a denial of God. If it is shocking for a person to deny the divinity of Christ, it is none the less so for him to deny the personality of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, you will frequently find these two forms of unbelief together. But let us look at a few passages from the word of God which show beyond a question the personality of the Holy Spirit.

"Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? or whither shall

I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold Thou art there" (Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8). Here one of the attributes of God—His omnipresence—is ascribed to the Holy Spirit. Indeed, He is spoken of as God—"Thy presence."

"Christ, who through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14). Here we have another attribute—that of eternity. The Spirit of God is ever existent. "Lord Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting Thou art God" (Ps. xc. 1, 2). Such language could only be applied to the Eternal, and is suggested by the phrase, "the eternal Spirit."

"The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God . . . . . the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God" (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11). Omniscience, another attribute of Deity alone, is before us here as belonging to the Spirit. He knoweth, and searcheth all things, knoweth the end from the beginning, for He is God.

"The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life" (Job xxxiii. 4). God the Creator is almighty, omnipotent. None but Him can call into being. When therefore creation is ascribed to the Holy Spirit, it in the strongest way teaches both His personality and His Deity.

Thus the Spirit is omnipresent, eternal, omniscient and omnipotent. He is God.

Let us turn to a few more passages showing more particularly His personality. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . thou hast not lied unto men but unto God" (Acts v. 3, 4). Men cannot lie to an influence, or deceive what is not a person. A divine being had taken up His abode in the Church, which He

formed at Pentecost, and it was to Him that Ananias had lied. So in like manner, when the saints were waiting on God at Antioch, preparatory to the first expansive work of the Church, it was the Holy Ghost who said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts xiii. 1, 2). This but illustrates the personal oversight and direction of the sovereign Spirit as described in 1 Cor. 12: 11, "All these things worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will."

Without pausing to dwell upon the special significance of the passages, we might also notice how the personality of the Holy Spirit is emphasized in the exhortations, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (Eph. iv. 30), "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19), "Praying in the Holy Ghost" (Jude. 20). These are but a few of the passages abounding in the Scriptures, which are bereft of their meaning if the blessed Spirit of God is not a person. Any student of Scripture will think of many other passages equally clear.

Coming now to what is our subject this evening—the Holy Spirit in the Dispensations—it will hardly be necessary to more than remind you that there are dispensations in the history of God's ways with man. A dispensation is God's manner of dealing during any period of time. For our purpose at this time it will suffice to include these in three general divisions, marked most clearly in Scripture. We have the ages before Christ, the present or Christian period, and the future or Millennial age.* All God's

*While the first period, from Adam to Christ, has evidently three divisions—the age of promise, from Adam to the flood; the age of Government, under Noah and his successors; and the National age from the call of Abraham and the establishment of Israel as a nation, until Christ—yet for our purpose these three divisions may be considered as one, with common characteristics.

counsels centre in Christ, and until He came and accomplished His work, all God's ways were of a preparatory and anticipative character. The law had a shadow of good things to come. God could and did bless individuals, give revelations of His will, and intrust a testimony to a special people, but everything looked onward; the heir was yet a child, under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the Father. During this period the Holy Spirit's work was, of course, in accordance with the purpose of God. He was, as ever, the executor of the divine will.

We may class what we have to say of this first dispensation under three general heads: The work of the Spirit in the individual, His prophetic work, and the types of fuller and more abundant work in time to come.

God has ever, and will ever, so long as His day of patience lingers, work in the souls of individuals. The verse which we have already quoted shows us, though typically, that when the ruin had come in and man was morally waste and desolate, the blessed Spirit of God began His work. He broods amid nature's darkness, over the heart of man, and light shines into the soul through His instrumentality. Thus the first glimmers of faith in Adam giving his wife her name—the mother of living, amid a scene of death,—or in Abel bringing his sacrifice to God, witness of a divine work in the soul, of faith and a new life produced where absolute death had come in through separation from God.

We are not speaking of the character of this new life, but of the fact. Did Enoch have life when he pleased God? did Noah when he prepared the ark? did Abraham when he left kindred and country at the call of God? Doubtless their intelligence was limited, and the character of their walk and testimony correspondingly modified. But can a man walk with God unless he has life? Can a man believe God and not live unto Him?

So when our Lord spoke to Nicodemus of the new birth, He was talking of what any spiritual mind would acknowledge. When we come to Ezekiel we will see passages to which, no doubt, our Lord directly referred in that memorable interview; but who that realized what the fall meant, the separation from God and moral death resulting, could doubt that a new life was needed?

Thus new birth, in the individual, is the first work of the Spirit of God of which we speak. Let us thank Him for the gift of life by the Spirit. It is the common blessing of all dispensations. Revelations vary, modes of dealing change—ever accomplishing the counsels of Him who is perfect in wisdom; but the common life produced by the Spirit of God is in the whole family—before Christ, now, and during the Millenial age. Abraham was, and is, the father—in moral relationship—of all them that believe.*

Passing now to another and quite different feature of the work of the Spirit in Old Testament times, we find a large number of most interesting instances of which we will take a few.

Exodus xxxi. 2, 3. "See I have called by name Bezaleel . . . . . and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and in understanding, and in knowledge and in all manner of workmanship," &c. God had given Moses

*I add a further word to avoid any possible misunderstanding of what is so unmistakable. We are not speaking of intelligence, nor of position. The greatest possible difference exists as to these. Old Testament saints were not in the Church, were not indwelt by the Spirit, were not linked with Christ in glory, doubtless were not consciously justified and in the light before God, as we, Christians, are. But they did have life,—for death is the opposite of life—and surely they were not dead and under wrath. That Christianity is "more abundant" life, all will admit. It is the full unfolding of the blessed purposes of God's love. But let us recognize the common family tie.

the pattern of the Tabernacle, had described the materials of which it was to be made and its parts in minute detail. To carry out, to execute these plans, He specially qualified two men, giving them His Spirit to endow them. I believe it is a great mistake to think that these men were simply skillful workmen, or even that we have here a recognition that God is the giver of all ability. There is something special here, and when we remember what the Tabernacle was to show forth, we are not surprised. It was said of the Spirit by our Lord, "He shall glorify me," (John xvi. 14). The Tabernacle was intended to set forth the glories of Christ, and need we wonder at the special endowment and supervision of the Holy Spirit, that every part might perfectly express the thoughts of God. I love to think of the Holy Spirit directing these men, so that all—boards and sockets, curtains, veil and furniture—might speak of the person and work of the blessed Lord. Here there was a directing, supervising work of the Spirit for a special purpose.

Let us look next at a very different kind of passage: Numbers xxiv. 2. "And Balaam lifted up his eyes and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him," &c. The history of Balaam furnishes food for solemn thought. He had no love for God, nor for the people of God. He loved money and all that goes with it. He was willing to do anything for money. Here we see him desiring to be the tool of Balak, king of Moab, and to curse Israel for him. It meant a reward and honor for him, and eager was he to do his work.

But Balaam knew that he could do naught but by the Spirit of God, yea and that he must speak standing by the altar and the sacrifice. What a sight! the bitter relentless enemy of God's people, king Balak, eagerly waiting for the curse to fall upon them; the willing tool, Balaam,

desiring to be permitted to blast them with God's malediction—but the sacrifice and the altar, speaking of redemption for a sinful people. Do you wonder that no curses, but blessings only, fall from the lips of Balaam? that the Spirit of God compels this wretched man to speak the truth? "How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy whom the Lord hath not defied?" Beloved brethren, every one, whether Satan or his tools, must pronounce his curse upon the people of God standing, as it were, by the cross. All our blessings come from that cross, and Satan's futile rage cannot reverse it.

Notice how remarkably the Spirit of God works here. Balaam is not regenerate, and he is linked with the enemies of God; and yet the Spirit puts a word in his mouth and compels its utterance. That word is as true as any that inspiration ever uttered—blessedly true—and yet spoken by the unwilling lips of a wicked man! What an illustration of the mighty irresistible power of that Spirit, and what a joy to know that the power is *for* and not against us. Alas! poor Balaam! he may speak by the Spirit, but be a stranger to the Spirit. He falls among the enemies of God, having done his utmost to defile those whom he could not destroy (See Rev. ii. 14).

Other similar instances occur where unregenerate persons were made the instruments, for the time being, of the Spirit of God. 1 Sam. xi. 6, "And the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings and his anger was kindled greatly," etc. I have selected this passage as one of many showing the work of the Spirit in leading to definite action. Throughout the book of Judges it is of frequent occurrence, when God was about to deliver his people. We would fain believe that many upon whom the Spirit thus came were children of God. Alas! no proof of that exists as to king Saul—a man of un-

bounded opportunities who departed from God, persecuted the man of God, and passed, at last, out of the world by his own hand, after having consulted a witch. But there can be no question that the Spirit made use of king Saul to conquer the enemies of the Lord. Who are the mightiest foes when the Spirit of God takes hold of one? "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of God lifts up a standard against them." The power of the Spirit is here seen.

So also when Saul would pursue David, he sends messengers (1 Samuel xix. 18-24) to take him; but when these see the prophets at Ramah and hear their words, the Spirit of God falls upon them likewise and they are compelled to own His power. Even Saul himself must yield to this and himself become for the time the pliant instrument in the hands of the Spirit.

But this just leads us to the border land of the Spirit's work in prophecy. It would be farthest from the truth to think that He ordinarily used enemies, or those not born again. On the contrary, without doubt, His usual channels of communication were children of God, who bowed in soul to the message, were in the current of His purpose, and thus appropriate instruments of His will. We must then look a little at prophecy in Old Testament times.

While there was much in common between the judge and the prophet, we think of the former as an administrator chiefly, while the work of the latter was mainly to convey the mind of God to His people. Prophecy takes its rise, as a distinctive thing, upon the failure of the priesthood. Peter notes this in one of his pentecostal addresses, naming Samuel as the first (Acts iii. 24). We cannot here speak in detail of that dark and humbling page in Israel's history, when the lamp of the Lord burned so dimly in His house at Shiloh and finally went out in

the gloom—the ark of God in captivity, His priests slain for their failure and sin, and "Ichabod," descriptive of that place where the glory once abode. Eli had failed, though he loved God, but his sons knew not and loved not the Holy One. Never again did God's throne return to Shiloh. "He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men . . . . He refused the tabernacle of Joseph and chose not the tribe of Ephraim," (Ps. lxxviii. 60, 67). Typically, the ark returned to Mount Zion as God's rest forever (Ps. cxxxii. 3, 14). But not yet has the glory truly taken up its abode there, and will not till the true King comes of whom David and Solomon were but types.

It was in this interval between the pristhood and the king that the prophet arose. And for Israel his work continued until John the Baptist. "The Law and the prophets were until John" who while a prophet was more than that, because he was the messenger sent before the face of the Lord.

But we cannot speak in detail of the work of the prophet save as it bears upon our subject. The Spirit of God came with a special message when the ordinary channels of communication between God and His people had become choked. Ordinarily, the priesthood was for the maintenance of relationship. But when that failed, the people were cut off from all intercourse, save where individual faith doubtless laid hold upon Him. The Lord's sacrifice was abhorred and His people scattered as sheep.

We see the sovereignty of God, as well as His love, in calling out vessels of His choice to meet the need. This is emphasized in the selection of the child Samuel, sought of God as he was about to fall asleep. A sleeping child! what more unlikely instrument, in human judgment, for the Spirit of God. So all along in subsequent history.

God chose His messengers as it pleased Him—often the most unlikely, as in the case of Amos.

Then, too, the message of the prophet was remarkable. I do not think you will find the prophet attempting to restore things to their former condition. We may take it as almost an axiom that God never restores a ruin. There were two things however which the prophet did declare: first, he brought home the sin of the people and laid it upon their conscience, and often for the time being there would be a measure of repentance and a postponement of the threatened judgment. But the second part of the prophet's work was to point forward to the only true remedy, the coming and reign of Christ.

To the eye of sense the work of the prophet was hopeless and gloomy in the extreme. Without specifying, a few chapters in Isaiah, Jeremiah or Ezekiel will confirm this. But if the gloom rested upon the scene close at hand, the glory of God lighted up the future. The weary prophet might and did scan the pages of his message with the earnest inquiry when the morning would break, with the reply that it could only come when Christ came.

Now all this varied and rich ministry was the work of the Spirit of God. There is a remarkable passage in 1 Peter which confirms this: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven" (1 Peter i. 10-12). Here we are told the Spirit of Christ foretold His sufferings and glory—a glory not yet revealed for Israel

and the earth. The prophets longed to know when these things should be (see Dan. xii. 8), and to them it was revealed that they would take place when Christ came. Thus the Holy Spirit was engaged during this time in telling the people their sins and then pointing forward to the glory of Christ's kingdom. Of course, I need hardly say the prophets knew nothing of the Church, that mystery hidden in the bosom of God, but only of the kingdom, whose establishment still waits.

This, most fragmentary, view of prophecy must suffice us for the present. At any rate we see what place the blessed Spirit of God occupied in it. All was preparatory and predictive. Into details, as I said, we cannot go. The history of Elijah and Elisha in Israel, and of the various servants of God in Judah, as recorded in the books of Chronicles, will show how varied this service was. The Holy Spirit was, if we may use such language, bridging the time between the failed priesthood and the coming King, who should as Priest upon His throne unite in unfailing blessedness both offices (see Zech. vi. 13). But we must turn to the closing feature of the Spirit's presentation in Old Testament times.

We can hardly speak of the types of the Spirit as a part of His *work*, but it is at least a part of the way in which He is presented to us in the Old Testament, and this seems to be therefore the place for a glance at these types.

When God breathed into man the breath of life (Gen. ii. 7), we seem to have a figure of the Spirit breathed into the new man. Certainly our Lord's action in breathing upon His disciples, was a reminder of this, and His words leave no doubt as to His meaning: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" (John xx. 22). He was the *giver* ot the Spirit. Man is but the receiver. And does not this inbreathing of the Spirit suggest that He is to control the entire life of the new man?

But we come next to a clearer type of the Spirit—the dove in the ark (Gen. viii. 7-12). This need not detain us long, for all is familiar and clear here. The flood speaks of the judgment coming upon all men for their sins; the ark, of Christ the only shelter from the judgment. He has gone through the flood of wrath, and as the ark touched Ararat, the new earth, so Christ risen has passed into the new scene. But His people while still prisoners of hope, can know nothing of what is theirs in Christ risen. Therefore the Spirit,—the dove is given to make us know what is ours. The dove is sent out thrice to make known the state of what was not visible. On his first flight he finds nothing but a scene of desolation, and in contrast to the raven, who will feed upon the refuse of what has been judged, he returns to the Ark. The Spirit of God can find nothing in a world under judgment to rest upon, and returns, as it were, to Christ. It is as though He said to us, You will find nothing in all this world for your heart to rest upon; Christ is all. On the contrary the raven, type of the flesh, chooses anything but the restraint of the ark; just as the flesh cannot endure the presence of Christ.

Next, the dove brings back something from the new earth—an olive leaf, pledge of fruitfulness after the judgment. So the Spirit is for us the earnest of our inheritance—the foretaste and the pledge of what is to come. The olive leaf itself suggests the fruits of the Spirit—the olive producing oil—which are in connection with the new creation. Thus the Spirit would occupy us with "the things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

The dove lastly flies off into the regenerated earth, and thus Noah knows that the waters have departed. I need hardly say how the time is soon coming when the Spirit, who now fills the heart with longing for the coming of

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the Lord, will with the Church pass into that inheritance of which He is now the earnest. No one can fail to notice too the appropriateness of the dove as a type of the Spirit. Love and sorrow are the characteristics of the gentlest of birds, and fittingly set forth the infinite tenderness and love of that Holy Person, who rested upon the "Man of sorrows."

Exodus xiii. 21 gives us another type of the Spirit. Israel have been sheltered by the blood of the Passover Lamb in the land of Egypt, and have set out on their journey to the promised land. Before they cross the Red Sea, the Lord leads them by a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud by day. In like manner are those who have found shelter behind the blood of Christ, accompanied all their journey through. This Shekinah-cloud is ever with them, as the Holy Spirit abides with us forever. Let us notice too how His presence is manifest—in *contrast* with the surroundings; by day there is a cloud casting its shadow over them; in the darkness of the night a bright pillar of fire shines through the "encircling gloom." So is it with the Spirit and the believer. In the day-time of life, when the sun of prosperity shines brightly, the Spirit would ever remind us not to trust in these uncertain things; the world is a place of change and its brightest scenes are but the harbingers of coming sorrow. But in the night of affliction, when sorrow falls like a dark pall, and we see nothing here to rest upon, how brightly does the Spirit shine ever leading us on to the abode of God who is light.

We find the Spirit presented in still another type in Exodus xxvii. 20, 21. Here it is the oil for the lamps, a well-known emblem of the Holy Spirit. We can barely hint at the fulness of meaning here. The tabernacle, as we said a little while ago, with all its furniture, speaks of Christ. Altar of incense and table with showbread, tell

of His varied characters and offices. Particularly, the golden candlestick, with its seven branches adorned with almond blossoms and fruits, tells us of a Risen, divine Lord, the giver of the Spirit. Now all this beauty would be invisible but for the oil by which the lamps illumine every thing. Thus the Spirit enables us to see the beauty of Christ, and to engage intelligently in His worship.

The oil comes in another way in anointing. Priests and kings were thus set apart for their work, and this reminds us how God anointed the Lord Jesus with the Holy Ghost (Acts x. 38). It is beautiful to see too the oil poured upon a cleansed leper (Lev. xiv. 14, 17). The same Spirit who came upon Christ, anointing Him for service comes upon the sinner cleansed by His precious blood.

But we must now pass to the second portion of our subject, the Spirit during the Christian dispensation. As we are not to dwell upon the former age it was well to devote more time to it in this introductory lecture. In like manner as all our subsequent evenings will be devoted to the Spirit in the present age, our consideration of that part will be correspondingly brief.

There are just two lines of truth here that I wish to dwell upon to-night, believing them to give largely what is the specific and special work of the Spirit at the present time. They are the Baptism and the Indwelling of the Spirit.

When John the Baptist, the forerunner of our Lord, was preaching repentance and making disciples—baptizing them in water, as a badge of discipleship and a sign of the death they deserved, he said to the expectant multitude, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (Matt. iii. 11). The Lord Jesus is the one who baptizes with the Holy Ghost.

While the baptism with fire unquestionably points on, as the context shows, to the final judgment of sinners, yet even now the Spirit of God brings the truth of judgment home to the soul. Thus, anticipating judgment, the soul bows to the sentence of God and accepts His salvation. Thus there is a modified baptism of fire at Pentecost, indicated by the tongues of fire.

But it is of the baptism of the Spirit that we are speaking now. After His resurrection our Lord refers to John's prediction as being near fulfilment. "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence" (Acts i. 5). Thus all during our Lord's earthly ministry, the Spirit had not been given in the way here described. Turning to Acts ii. we find the wondrous outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the baptism promised and waited for.

This marks the beginning of the Church, the body of Christ, as our next quotation will show. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13). The Church is the body of Christ, it is a unit. In contrast to previous national or social distinctions, the Spirit unites all its members into one living organism. The Spirit sets the various members, with their various functions, in the body according to His sovereign will. Thus there are many individual members, yet but one body.

What is involved in all this it will be our privilege to see later, if the Lord please. Just here we wish simply to note the special work of the Spirit in this baptism. This marks, as we were saying, the beginning of the Church. Persons who have not understood this fact have spoken of the Church as beginning with the call of Abraham, or with the deliverance of Israel from Egypt. They would apply the glowing predictions of the prophets as to the

future glory of Israel to the spiritual prosperity of the Church. Not only does the utmost confusion result from this, but positive injury is done to the saints of the present age, by linking their hopes and interests with the development of an earthly Kingdom, instead of showing their destiny as members of the Body, the Bride of Christ, to be heaven and its glories.

The Baptism of the Spirit then was foretold by John the Baptist, reaffirmed by our risen Lord, and on His ascent to the right hand of God, it then began. Since that time every believer is baptized by the Spirit, introduced into the Church, the Body of Christ.

The second and only other characteristic feature of the Spirit's work during Christianity, to which we will refer to-night, is the Indwelling. All Christians are familiar with that wondrous discourse of our Lord in the 14th, 15th and 16th chapters of John. Two great facts are spoken of repeatedly—His own departure to the Father, and the coming and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Previously, in the 7th chapter, the Evangelist had stated that the Holy Ghost was not given because Jesus was not yet glorified. In speaking of His departure to the glory, our Lord links with it the promise of the Spirit. He should come in an especial manner and dwell in them, never to depart. This blessed Comforter, or Advocate, would testify of Christ, would bring all things to their remembrance and show them things to come.

Of such immense importance was the coming and indwelling of the Spirit that our Lord tells His disciples that it was expedient, advantageous, for Him to go away in order that the Spirit might come. Had He not said it, who could have conceived the possibility of there being any privilege greater than personal contact and association with the Lord Himself. But when we compare the disciples, with their partial and earthly conceptions be-

fore Pentecost, and those same disciples after the descent of the Spirit, we see how true were our Lord's words.

We will look at but two phases of the indwelling of the Spirit, individual and corporate: "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price?" (1 Cor. vi. 19, 20). Here the body of the individual believer is called the temple, the sanctuary of the Holy Spirit. What a fact! God the Spirit dwelling *in* us. That holy presence, that divine Being! What place can sin have in connection with such a presence? Not only are the grosser forms of evil, spoken of in the immediate context, excluded by such a fact, but the unclean or selfish thought, the idle word—what place have they in the temple of God? What grace too this is, when we think that these bodies were once the abodes and the servants of sin. Dear brethren, how feeble is our conception of the presence of this blessed, heavenly Guest! May we realize it more fully.

Other passages furnish another wondrous thought of the indwelling of the Spirit. "In whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 22). The subject here is not the individual saint, but all who are upon the foundation of which Christ is the corner-stone. These all form the temple or house of God, which is growing (without sound of hammer, under the silent working of the Spirit) into a holy temple in the Lord. The topmost stone will soon be laid, and amid universal joy the Church, the heavenly temple or dwelling place of God, will be manifested in glory. But meanwhile the whole body of believers is looked upon as a temple, a habitation for the Spirit of God.

It ill becomes us to be censorious, but, beloved brethren, when we think of the Church in the mind of God, and as even now indwelt by the Spirit, and then

look about us at the rent and divided state of the saints, can we fail to ask where is the temple of the Spirit? Where is that one Church, the habitation of God? Surely no group of saints in the divided state amongst us, could lay claim to being the temple of God. Such arrogance brings its own rebuke. But, oh! shall we not weep as we think of the purposes of God, and at the wreck of things as left in man's hands?

But though we are in the midst of ruins, God's truth remains, and the blessed fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in the whole Church corporately is as true now as at Pentecost. That the Church has lost incalculably by failing to realize this fact, and to own the presence and control of the Spirit, it is scarcely necessary to say. Think of God the Spirit dwelling in, presiding over the whole testimony on earth! Think of His directing all worship, energizing all service, ordering all discipline. What room for forms, human directors, and human contrivances? And let us be well assured of this, that where there is faith to count upon God and obedience to His truth, the presence of the Spirit in the Church will be found to be no mere doctrine, but a blessed reality, even to two or three who acknowledge His presence. Only let Him be supreme, let Him control absolutely, by the word of God, and saints of God will find what a stupendous fact we have been considering.

These then are the two *characteristic* features of the Spirit's work at this time—Baptism and Indwelling. The first shows us the formation of the Church, the Body of Christ, as distinct from every other work of God, and the latter shows us the power for walk and order both in the individual and the Church as a whole. This must serve but as the introduction to what will further engage our attention.

It now remains for us to consider the distinctive features

of the Spirit's work during the Millennium, the period of Israel's glory and of Christ's reign upon the earth.

We will begin by quoting a passage which is of double interest, as linking together the two dispensations, or rather as giving what is common to both. Peter began his address at Pentecost by quoting a passage from the prophet Joel: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit . . . and it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for *in Mount Zion* and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel ii. 28-32).

Now it may be said that Peter's quotation of this passage and his application of it to the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost disproves what we have been saying of the unique character and destiny of the Church. Is it not after all identical with Israel? A few considerations will clear this up, and show that Israel and the Church are absolutely distinct. You will recall the predictions and remark of our Lord as to John the Baptist. It was said that he would go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elias (Luke i. 17). Our Lord in speaking of him said, "Elias is come already and they knew him not" (Matt. xvii. 10-12). He had previously declared, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come" (Matt. xi. 14).

Now, here it is perfectly plain that John was in his person and ministry a fulfilment of the promise as to Elias. If they had bowed to his message and accepted him, they would have found that the kingdom of Christ would have been introduced and the day of the Lord

ushered in. But they had no heart for John and did to him as they listed.

In just the same way, the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost was, to all intents, had the nation been ready to bow to God, the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy. Students of Scripture have frequently remarked how lingeringly God bore with the Jews all through the first seven chapters of Acts. Until Stephen's death, we might say, the Lord was ready to return to the repentant nation. Alas! the nation was not ready to have Him, and so the counsels of God went on to their fulfilment as to the Church. Had they received the truth as a nation, the prophecy of Joel would have been completely fulfilled; as it was, that fulfilment, for Israel, remains until a future day. Then upon Mount Zion, God's earthly centre, there will be deliverance, and through the remnant who turn to Him blessing shall flow out to the nation and the world at large.

The Millennium, then, will be marked by the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh in connection with a display of special prophetic gifts and judgments upon the enemies of Christ. You will note this is not baptism into one Body, nor Indwelling. Several passages will go into detail.

Those of you who are familiar with the subject of the arrangement of the books of the Bible according to their numerical structure* will remember that the prophet Ezekiel was the *third* of the prophetic books, which also themselves form the third group of Old Testament books. Three is the number of sanctification, and of the Spirit. In the prophets as a whole, and in Ezekiel particularly, we find these marks. Sanctification and the Spirit are a prominent theme. We will, therefore, turn to that prophet.

* The reader is referred to "The Numerical Structure of Scripture," by F. W. G

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean . . . A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes . . . And ye shall dwell in the land" (Ezek. xxxvi. 25-28). All God's dealings with the nation previous to this had been on the basis of law—with many merciful modifications and provisions—and as men in the flesh. They had failed again and again, for "they that are in the flesh cannot please God." But there will be a new order in the Millennium. The new covenant will be in operation, and its terms are, the law in their hearts and the Spirit given. (See, besides the portion we are considering, Jer. xxxi. 31-34.) The remnant of Israel will be a regenerate, a holy people. Blessed fact! A new born nation!

It is evidently to this passage in Ezekiel that our Lord refers in His interview with Nicodemus. He, as a teacher in Israel, should have known the necessity of New Birth—born of water and of the Spirit.

There seems also to be an allusion to the next chapter (xxxvii. 9, 14), in our Lord's reference to the wind blowing where it listeth. What is prominent in that chapter is the resurrection of the people from their graves, nationally speaking, and their restoration to the land and their reunion into the twelve tribes. Time would fail to dwell upon the beauties of that wondrous chapter. I commend it to your careful study together with other similar prophecies. It must suffice us now to know that the Spirit presides over all this blessed work of national resurrection, remission, restoration and regeneration. "And I will put my Spirit in you and ye shall live, and I will place you in your own land" (verse 14).

With the Spirit among them, all born of God, and

Christ over them and the sanctuary of God in the midst of them forevermore, well may the city and the land be called "Jehovah-shammah," the Lord is there.

Another chapter demands our attention before we close, the 47th of Ezekiel. The sanctuary has been rebuilt—in prophetic view—and the glory of God which left at the beginning, has returned to its final resting place (chap. xliii. 2-5). We are now to see the display of the Spirit and the blessings He brings.

Waters issue from the sanctuary and run eastward down to the Dead Sea. Water is a type of the Spirit of God in His life-giving activities, through the word of God. Life and blessing, through the Word and Spirit, flow forth to carry healing to the desolate places of the earth. Wherever the waters flow, life springs up: the bitter waters are healed and fish abound in the very lake of death. The Gentiles receive life and blessing through the Spirit and word of God. The Spirit is poured out from on high and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field (Isa. xxxii. 15).

And as the stream flows on, it deepens: first it reaches only to the ankles; further on the waters rise to the knees, then to the loins, until their mighty depths cannot be fathomed, "Waters to swim in." Thus the blessing of the Spirit widens out in the Millennium until the knowledge of the Lord covers the earth as the waters cover the sea. Need we wonder that this picture furnishes the imagery for higher blessing yet, and that the last vision revealed to John's eye was that of a stream of water clear as crystal with the tree of life upon its banks? After all the earth is to be but a reflection of the glory of the heavens.

This onflowing stream suggests the conversion of the Gentiles. It is a mistake to expect the conversion of the world in this age: the Lord is *taking out* of the Gentiles a people for His name, to form His heavenly bride, but

it will be only in the coming age that "a nation shall be born in a day."

Thus we have, imperfectly indeed, taken a survey of the subject of the Spirit in the Dispensations. How vast, how important a subject it is! I will leave three words with you as hinges upon which all that we have said turns. Before Christ, the Spirit's work, as well as all God's ways, was one of *preparation;* after the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, and in connection with the Church it was a time of *realization.* All is now real. During the Millennium, when Christ will be displayed in glory as King of His people and over all the earth, it will be the time of *manifestation.*

May He, that blessed One of whom we have been speaking, be unhindered in His work in our hearts and ways, in fulfilling our Lord's promise, "He shall guide you into all truth."

THE CHURCH.

"FATHER, oh how vast the blessing
When Thy Son returns again!
Then the Church its rest possessing,
O'er the earth with Him shall reign.

ISRAEL.

For the fathers' sakes belovèd,
Israel, in thy grace restored,
Shall on earth, the curse removed,
Be the people of the Lord.

Rev. vii.

Then, too, countless myriads, wearing
Robes made white in Jesu's blood,
Palms (like rested pilgrims) bearing,
Stand before the throne of God:—

These, redeemed from ev'ry nation,
Shall in triumph bless Thy name;
Ev'ry voice shall cry, 'Salvation
To our God and to the Lamb!'"

LECTURE II

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SALVATION:—

CONVICTION, REGENERATION, SEALING, ASSURANCE

"O LORD, how blest our journey, tho' here on earth we roam,
Who find in Abba's favor our spirit's present home!
For where Thou now art sitting by faith we've found repose,
Free to look up to heavèn, since our blest Head arose.

In spirit there already; soon we ourselves shall be
In soul and body perfect, all glorified, with Thee:
Thy Father's love sustains us along the thorny way,
Thy Father's house the dwelling made ready for that day.

The Comforter, now present, assures us of Thy love;
He is the blessèd earnest of glory there above:
The river of Thy pleasure is what sustains us now,
Till Thy new name's imprinted on ev'ry sinless brow.

Lord, we await Thy glory; we have no home but there,
Where the adopted family with us Thy joy shall share.
No place can fully please us where Thou O Lord, art not;
In Thee, and with Thee, ever is found, by grace, our lot."

SALVATION is a term of quite varied meaning in the Scriptures, ranging from the deliverance out of any special strait, as Paul out of prison (Phil. i. 9), the victory over the daily trials and temptations, the redemption of the body, and of the spirit. God is the Saviour of all men—in that He preserves and sustains all flesh. We have the Father as Saviour in that it is His grace and love that gave His Son, and chose us in Him. The Son is Saviour because He laid down His life for us, accomplishing a work which has both glorified God and met our every need. The Spirit is Saviour by virtue of the work of regeneration and all that is connected with it, includ-

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ing the seal and assurance of salvation. This last is what will occupy us to-night.

Before, however, we come to our subject, there is a work of the Spirit in men which, for want of a better term, we may call ineffectual. By ineffectual it need hardly be said that the result only is looked at. It does not result in salvation. There can be no thought—which would surely be blasphemy—of inability on His part; but man hardens his heart and refuses to yield. And yet, even in this God's righteousness is vindicated. As the apostle says, "We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life" (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16). Solemn thought! Every mouth will be closed and all the universe will bow before God. Well may the apostle add, "Who is sufficient for these things;" not only the service with its arduous trials, but the solemn and eternal results.

We will turn first to a passage in the book of Genesis, chapter vi. 3, "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man." It seems that from the fall to the flood God left man completly to the light of nature, his own conscience and the strivings of the Holy Spirit. No government was established—apparently crime went unpunished—and there were none of the restraints, religious and civil, which He later established. Man was left to himself, save that there was the constant witness of the deity and power of God in His works, and of His goodness in His providential care. Doubtless there was the history of the first sin and its awful consequences, and the mysterious promise of future deliverance through the woman's Seed. Added to this was the faithful testimony of a man like Enoch, who told of approaching judgment upon the ungodly (Jude 14, 15).

These were the instrumentalities used by the Spirit of

God in striving with man's conscience: the fall, sin and the judgment of God; His power and goodness leading men to repentance, and the promise of the woman's Seed. There was also the witness of death, well calculated to call upon man to prepare to meet his God. All this work of the Spirit was upon man's moral nature; it was the persuasion, as of a man, only with divine wisdom and yearning, to lead him from the paths of folly.

What was the result of this striving? The earth was utterly corrupt and filled with violence. Every imagination of men's heart was only evil continually. Judgment begat no terrors, mercy and goodness produced no softening: they went on as ever, eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the flood came and destroyed them all.

Without doubt this striving of the Holy Spirit has continued and will continue till the close of the day of grace. New revelations have been given, new restraints imposed —lawlessness has been limited by government. Above all the Cross has come in as the revelation of the justice and love of God—His love to a guilty world. Thus the material, if we may so speak, has been increased, but the striving of the Spirit has gone on ever since; with what result our next quotation will show.

"Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did so do ye" (Acts vii. 51). Stephen had been reviewing the history of Israel under the promises and revelations of God. He had shown that at every fresh step in the unfolding of His purposes of love, God had been met with opposition. Moses had been sent, the people had been brought out of Egypt, had been set in the land, the tabernacle had been established as a divine centre, the kingdom set up under David, a temple built by Solomon. Each step had been taken after failure on their part to

enjoy what had been previously bestowed, and each step afforded but fresh occasion for them to resist the Holy Ghost. They despised Moses; they set up the golden calf; turned back, in heart, to Egypt; failed to drive out the Gentiles in the land, when brought there by Joshua; despised the Lord's offering, and compelled Him to forsake the tabernacle at Shiloh. When the temple was built and Solomon's reign of glory had been inaugurated, deeper apostasy marked both king and people, and the darkness deepened till the nation was carried away to Babylon.

Thus the people resisted the strivings of the Holy Spirit. Of course, there were individual exceptions, and multitudes in total who yielded. But the nation as a whole is described as resisting the Spirit.

The same has been true under Christianity. Added light has been given, and greater inducements than could have been conceived to lead men to accept the love of God. And yet the Spirit is resisted to-day as He was in Noah's day and in Stephen's. Every testimony of God, every providental act is used by the Spirit, but how often in vain. Never is there a special season of effort for souls, never a marked interest and much blessing, but it is accompanied by this awful resistance of the Spirit.

Next to resistance of the Spirit we will look at a still darker form of evil—the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men" (Matt. xii. 31).

It was but the next consistent step for a people who had always resisted the Holy Ghost to go further and blaspheme Him. As this is a subject but little understood, and one which has been the source of much suffering to sensitive consciences, it is well for us to see clearly what "the unpardonable sin" is. It is often explained in a way which

contradicts the gospel itself, and throws the precious truths of grace into the utmost confusion. A little careful reading of the connection of the passage will show what this awful sin was. I say *was*, for in a very real sense it is impossible for this sin to be committed now.

Our Lord had been casting out a demon, had been showing the power of the Spirit of God, through whom He performed all his miracles (see Acts x. 38). Beholding this power used to destroy the works of the devil, in the face of this witness, the leaders ascribed it to the devil. "He casteth out demons by Beelzebub." In Mark it is said "because they said He hath an unclean spirit." Thus the rulers called the Holy Ghost the devil. What was left for a people who confounded God and Satan (awful thought), what forgiveness could there be for those who, not in ignorance, but wilfully and deliberately thus acted?

But you will perceive that this peculiar form of blasphemy was necessarily confined to the time when our Lord was upon earth. His works had to be seen, His power over Satan clearly manifest in the miracle, before this climax of wickedness and enmity could find expression. None could commit the sin against the Holy Ghost now.

But ere we close this part of our subject, there is a solemn passage which applies to Christianity as the previous one did to Judaism. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God . . . and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace" (Heb. x. 28, 29).

This is one of those passages, peculiar to the epistle to the Hebrews, which refers to the sin of apostasy, giving up Christ and going back to Judaism. In the 6th chapter where a similar passage occurs, the apostle ennumerates

some of the blessings enjoyed by those who made a profession of Christianity. Among other things he says they "were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." A careful study of the passage, as well as the general subject of the epistle, will show that the blessings enumerated were external and not vital. Thus the partaking of the Holy Ghost did not mean baptism or indwelling by the Spirit, but introduction into the full blaze of Christian light, participation in the ministry of the Spirit in the Church, witnessing the powers of the coming age—in short, enjoying all the marvelous blessing into which Christianity introduced out of Judasim.

Now, when one had received all this light, and had professed to follow it, but had his heart unmoved, unbroken, and finally turned back into that from which he had been rescued, he was like ground which in response to rain from heaven yielded but thorns and briars. What hope could there be for such an one? He had trodden under foot the Son of God and openly insulted, as the word is, the Spirit of grace.

It is not my purpose to take the edge off the warnings of God's word, but it is well for us to clearly understand them. Open and deliberate apostasy is here meant, and not falling into sin, grievous and awful as that is. It is a distinct, deliberate and final trampling upon Christ, and is therefore closely allied with the sin against the Holy Ghost. It was a sin to which the Hebrews were peculiarly exposed, I would almost say exclusively, and one possible chiefly when the energy of the Spirit was unchecked, in the first bright days of His work. Now, alas! worldliness has so crept in that there is little need for Satan to lead men to apostatize; he lets them remain in the professing Church and carry the world into it. In those days the lines were sharply drawn and a man was either *for* Christ or against Him.

Thus we have seen four phases of ineffectual work on the part of the Spirit, because of the awful wickedness of man's heart. He strives, but is resisted; He was blasphemed, and openly insulted. Passing now to brighter themes, can we not say with the apostle, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you and things that accompany salvation?"

The first work of the Spirit which is effectual for salvation is the conviction of sin. There is a remarkable passage which so clearly presents this work of conviction by the Spirit, that we must examine it with some care. Our Lord, in His closing address to His disciples, to which we have already referred more than once, after telling them (John xvi. 7) that it was expedient (to their advantage) that He should leave them and go to the Father, in order that He might send them the Spirit, describes the work of this blessed Person in the world and in saints. As to the saints, we will take that up at another time, merely noticing as we pass that the great work is to guide them into all truth. But as to conviction of the world we will notice how complete it is. I quote the entire passage.

"And when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father and ye see me no more; of judgment because the prince of this world is judged" (John xvi. 8-11). It will be noticed that the entire work of the Spirit, so far as the world is concerned, is conviction or reproof. The light can only make manifest the works of darkness. Until those works are seen and judged, the Spirit can only maintain that testimony, there can be no work as "Comforter." In fact, the word so rendered is hardly that, but the same as the one rendered "Advocate" in the first epistle of John. It is one who undertakes the

whole work for another, an agent, if we may use such language.

Are we wrong in thinking of the Spirit as our *Lord's* advocate or agent here, in His absence, carrying on His work, fulfilling His will? Undoubtedly He is also the advocate for His people too, looking to all their interests and ministering to all their needs. In this way He might be designated "Comforter." But in relation to the world He represents Christ. Just as our Lord, when He was here, by His testimony convinced the world of sin—"Me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil" (John vii. 7)—so now the Spirit as His representative, continues this work of conviction in the world at large and in individuals.

This conviction is threefold—of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. Three is the number of complete manifestation, and the result of this conviction is to manifest man fully as he is. No hiding-place is left where he can escape the solemn conclusion pressed upon him by the Spirit of truth. The light manifests him, reproves him, showing him his present state as a guilty man and the future of judgment looming dark in the not very distant background.

From the fall, without doubt, the Spirit of God has been convincing men of sin. He never left Himself without a witness, and what we have seen of the striving of the Spirit shows how conscience was constantly appealed to. But when Christ came, the manifestation of the character of God—going about doing good, in meekness testifying of righteousness and of love—the sin which had up to that time found expression in the lusts of self-will, all comes to a centre. Sin will now be shown as such in one act. Men might argue that in spite of this or that wrong, they were not bad at heart—just as they argue to-day. But now God gives the opportunity for man to show what

he was. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin" (John xv. 22).

In the days of "moderatism" in the church of Scotland, a preacher in the morning said, "If virtue were to appear upon the earth incarnate, ravished by her beauty men would fall down and worship her." In the evening a servant of Christ, occupying the same pulpit, during his discourse said, "Virtue incarnate did come to earth, and men's cry was, 'Away with Him, crucify Him.'" And surely this is true. Christ has come, and into His bosom has gathered all the hatred and wickedness of a world without God. The spear that pierced Him represents man's hatred, man's sin. Blessed be God it opened the way for all the infinite love of God to flow out.

So, now, the Spirit in His work of conviction, brings this one fact to bear upon man's conscience. What has he done with Christ, what has been his thought of Christ? Take an average congregation of hearers; we could not preach to them as murderers, thieves, or grossly immoral. Much of this would fall off from their armor-incased consciences and hearts. But when the personal claims of Christ are presented, when they are asked whether he is to them individually the object of faith and love—all other differences vanish, every man is alike convicted of sin.

Here is common ground for all—the lofty moralist, the delicate, refined woman and the gross sensualist—all are alike concluded under sin, because they have not believed in Christ, Unbelief makes common company of all men. They would not have recognized the common tie in any other way. They can look down upon those inferior in position and lower in morals, but here they are together—all alike in this one fact which God has made the pivot.

But we must guard against a misapprehension which has obtained in some quarters, that now unbelief is the

only sin of which men stand guilty before God. Surely in a world reeking with every form of iniquity, it will hardly be necessary to deny this. The argument is, that when our Lord died, He bore and put away all sin, that God does not look upon men as sinners because of what they have done, but simply because of their rejection of Christ.

Surely when the Spirit of God now convicts of sin He does not do less than He did before the cross. The rejection of Christ does not obliterate but emphasizes every other sin committed. Here is a possible atonement for heinous sins: the atonement is rejected and this makes the sins all the more heinous. In the final judgment, the books are opened, in which the record of the life has been kept. The book of life is also opened, and thus we see men are judged both for what they have committed and for their unbelief.

Now, it is the special work of the Spirit, through His instruments, those whom He fills, to bring home to the world its guilt in the rejection of Christ. Looked at in another way, it is the sins we have committed which crucified the Lord. In a very real way the convicted soul realizes this, and amid all the cries of hatred and rage and scorn in the rabble that stood around the cross he can distinguish his own voice. Thus the Spirit convicts of sin. In the case of the Jews, there had been the direct and actual rejection, "We will not have this man to rule over us."

Next, the Spirit convicts of righteousness. I think this is very little understood; the words are very simple and we are apt to use them without attaching any special meaning to them. What is it to be convicted of righteousness, and how does the Spirit convict the *world* of this? Already His work has been, as we have seen, to convict the world of *sin*. Manifestly, it would be a contradiction

to suppose that the Spirit proved to the world its own righteousness. It has none—only sin.

He convicts of sin, "because I go to my Father and ye see me no more." The whole world is lying in the wicked one—it has no righteousness. The sentence of God is, "There is none righteous; no not one." But the Spirit brings a solemn reminder of where righteousness is. Once it was upon earth, in the person of the blessed Son of God, who always did His Father's will. But we look for it here in vain. All has lapsed, so far as the world is concerned, into the unrelieved darkness of sin. How this links with that previous conviction of sin, Christ is no longer here.

Thus the world is convicted of righteousness in the fact that Jesus is now with the Father. They treated Him as a malefactor, as a blasphemer against God, as a plotter against the stability of government. That was their estimate of Christ. But God has raised Him from the dead and placed him at His own right hand. He has lifted Him out of the lowest shame in which man's estimate had put Him and exalted Him to the highest place in Heaven. The righteousness which the world would not have, God has received into heaven and enthroned it there! What an awful conviction. God could not righteously leave His Holy One under the imputation of guilt. He *must* declare His righteousness, and so He is raised from the dead by the glory of the Father. What a vindication of the Lord! What a condemnation of the world! Well might the apostle give the resurrection of Christ as God's assurance of coming judgment (Acts xvii. 31).

There is another and blessed side to this at which we can but glance. If, after His work of sin-bearing was complete, God has raised His Son and glorified Him, is it not a proof that God has in righteousness accepted that work? And that now He can righteously forgive the

sinner who believes in Jesus? So He is just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. Thus God's righteousness is manifested in the resurrection and seating of Christ in glory, and that righteousness is for, not against, every soul that believeth in Jesus. But this emphasizes afresh the guilt of a world which rejects Him. It cast Him out when He came, and now, having no righteousness of its own, it still refuses Him who, if it would receive Him, would be made righteousness for it.

For a world that has refused Christ and has no righteousness of its own (righteousness on the throne being the proof of its guilt) there is but one thing left—judgment. So the last convicting work of the Spirit is to bring home the fact of judgment upon the consciences of men. This He does, not merely by warning of a judgment in the future—"as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"—but He brings home the fact that judgment has already been pronounced and inflicted—in the mind of God—upon the prince of this world.

It is not some obscure person who has thus been judged, but the ruler and prince of this world—Satan himself. Little did he think in his plottings, entering into Judas, bringing together all the powers of darkness, that he was but hastening his own doom, and that in the very hour of his greatest apparent triumph, the judgment of God had fallen upon him. True, he was bruising the heel of the woman's Seed, but his own head was crushed by the mighty Victor.

But how much this means for the world. If the prince has fallen under judgment, how can his subjects hope to escape? If the mighty strong man who held all the world as his "goods," has succumbed to the power of a stronger than he, where will poor, puny man hide from the awful doom that awaits him?

Thus the cross declares the judgment, both of Satan and of the world. Not an uncertain thing, as we have seen, in the future, but an accomplished fact in the head and representative of all, the one whom the world had chosen for itself.

Here, again, however, for faith, the very conviction of judgment brings the promise of deliverance. Is the ruler—the one who held me in bondage—judged? Has he, who had the power of death, been annulled? Then is there not deliverance for me, if I do but accept this judgment of the cross and flee, in faith, to the One there smitten for me?

Thus we have the full conviction of the world by the Spirit—of sin, righteousness, and judgment. After this conviction, self-righteousness cannot lift its head. Man without excuse stands, as it were, in eternity and before Almighty God. God the Holy Ghost has brought him there, and the work of conviction is done. Nothing is left but the blackness of darkness forever, or, blessed be God, full salvation.

May I speak of a fact too common, alas, to have escaped your observation? We are living in times of superficial conviction. Souls are not plowed up by the Spirit of God, as He would do. Men say, "Peace, peace," too easily. The sinner is not made to realize the awfulness of his position—a guilty, *lost* and helpless soul on the brink of eternity. I know this is not considered popular preaching, and that it is hardly thought proper or wise to speak of the hell of eternity that awaits Christ-rejectors.

As a result, the work of conviction is very superficial, and, even when real, of but shallow depth. Souls must be convicted of sin if they are to receive the gospel. That gospel is not a mere piece of logic to be reasoned about: "All men are sinners; Christ died for sinners; therefore He died for me." Cold, heartless, lifeless ac-

quiescense in this is not faith, nor salvation. It is the awakened soul that realizes what it is to be lost that can appreciate, as cold water to a thirsty man, the gospel of the grace of God. Men trim down the solemn fact of man's sin, and thus the Spirit's work of conviction is hindered. What wonder that the professing church is full of unsaved souls.

But let us take an example of this convicting work of the Spirit. I think you will find without forcing, the three features, conviction of sin, righteousness, and judgment. It is the first gospel sermon preached, after the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost, by Peter. We might use his own language, "preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

First, as to conviction of sin, he brings home to them the fact of their rejection of Christ: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23). Here the Holy Ghost brings home the fact of their sin. It was not now a question of this and that transgression, but they had refused to believe on Christ—had rejected Him.

Next, he convicts them of righteousness, because Jesus had gone to the Father: "Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be holden of it . . . Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear" (Acts ii. 24, 33). How clearly God had manifested His righteousness, and vindicated His beloved Son in thus raising and exalting Him to the right hand of power.

Not so prominently, but still clearly there, the Spirit of God had brought home to them the reality of judgment: "I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the

earth beneath, blood and fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts ii. 19, 20). All nature would quake in the presence of its Judge, and this judgment was imminent.

Thus we have the threefold conviction of sin, and what was the result? "Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles: Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Blessed work! Is there not joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth? and here were three thousand souls crying under conviction—the mighty work of the Spirit of God. Blessed and easy work now for Peter to set Christ before them, and to assure them of free forgiveness in His name, and of the gift of the Spirit. They believed his word and confessed Christ.

Now, this brings us to the next division of our subject: regeneration or new birth. We have dwelt at length upon conviction, but I shall not regret it if it deepen in our souls a sense of the immense importance of this, if souls are to be born to God. Let me quote from Scripture:

"He came unto His own and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him to them gave He power (or the right) to become the sons (or children) of God, even to them that believe on His name: who were *born*, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 11–13). We have just seen the convicted Jews receiving Christ. Here we are told that such reception constitutes new birth. Souls are born again, born of God, as His children, who receive the rejected Saviour.

Connected with this passage is the familiar proof text as to new birth. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John iii. 3). He is incapable of seeing, or appre-

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hending the precious reality of God's spiritual Kingdom, because he has not been born again. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" (John iii. 5). He has no right, no authority, to enter a scene for which by nature he is unfitted. He must be born of water—surely not baptism. Who could conceive of literal water imparting a nature or giving a title? Ritualism has read baptism into the third chapter of John, and the Lord's supper into the sixth chapter, where eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood is spoken of; and in neither is there a hint of baptism or the Lord's supper. Born of water is, as we shall see in a moment, born of the Spirit by the word of God; and eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood is actual appropriation by faith of the value of His atoning death. But such is ritualism in all its forms—it robs us of divine realities and leaves us forms instead; forms all the more misleading for the unstable, because they were instituted by our Lord, and, in their place, are of priceless value.

But let us return to the expression, "born of water and of the Spirit," for just here we will find help in understanding new birth. Water is a constant type in the Old Testament of the Spirit Himself, but always of the Spirit in the vehicle He uses, if I may use such an expression. There are in the New Testament several passages which, taken together, make very clear what this vehicle is.

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Pet. i. 23). Here new birth is ascribed to the living word of God. "Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word" (Eph. v. 25, 26). Here the cleansing and sanctifying action of water is said to be "by the Word." Thus, most clearly, water is a type

or symbol of the word of God, and by it souls are born anew.

It is evident that our Lord refers in this passage to the use of water as seen in Ezekiel xxxvi. 25, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." The cleansings under the law were ceremonial and external, and therefore unavailing. The prophet declares, and our Lord repeats, that this was to be real. A cleansing, not by purifying the flesh, but by a new birth, through the Spirit of God.

Returning now to the third of John, we understand our Lord to teach that new birth is absolutely essential for entrance in the Kingdom of God, and that this birth is by the power of the Holy Spirit, through the word of God received by faith. For we saw that those who believed on His name were those who were born of God. Here we see the beautiful suitability of our Lord's presenting His cross and Himself as the object of faith to a man like Nicodemus, outwardly moral, but who needed new birth, and this new birth must be by the Spirit's power making use of the gospel of the grace of God.

So far, all seems and is clear. It is only when men begin to reason about God's truth that a haze falls over it. Does new birth precede faith, or does it follow it? Such questions seek to separate what God has indissolubly joined together. That there are mysteries here, none would question. Does not our Lord say: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (Jno. iii. 8)? Here is mystery, and there must be in divine things. God is sovereign, and His work must be to some extent inscrutable to finite minds. But we must not reduce to the compass of logic these mighty truths. Surely,

it suffices to say new birth is a sovereign act of God, that He is first in it, and that it is by the Word through faith.

Can we go further and ask what is the character of this new birth? Undoubtedly we may, when we simply follow Scripture. What, then, is new birth? Looking to the close of the third of John we read, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," and this statement is repeated again and again throughout this Gospel, so much so, indeed, that we may safely say eternal life is the theme of John.

Birth is the beginning of man's earthly life—looking upon the impartation and birth as parts of one whole. A child begins, for us, to live when he is born, he receives life at his birth. So, following the analogy, at new birth the man receives life—spiritual life; he begins to live to God, and is now His child.

Connecting this with the verse just quoted, and remembering that faith is an integral element in new birth, we have the simple and self-evident fact that new birth is the impartation of spiritual life, of divine, eternal life, to the soul. I need not add that eternal life does not mean merely immortal existence. Life, in John, is not mere existence. All men are immortal by their very constitution. To say that a man is dead in sins does not mean that he has ceased to exist—far from it—but that he has no relationship with God.

Let us turn to another scripture that completes the thought: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is born of God" (1 John, iii., 9). How beautifully clear is this! God is the author of new birth. Is He the author of sin? When we ascribe moral character to a life or a person we speak of it as nature. Here we are told that as born of God we have a nature sinless and

incapable of sin. The soul is born of God; the divine seed is permanent, and it is incapable of being corrupted. New birth, then, is the impartation of a sinless nature.

You have heard of the familiar illustration which is used to explain the existence of the flesh, the old nature, in the believer also. A nursery-man plants, we will say, a quantity of peach seeds. They grow up, but are seedlings, merely natural growth with a positive tendency to degeneration. For him these trees are worthless, unless they are, as it were, born again—that is, they must have a new nature, a new life imparted. He goes to a tree of approved quality, and from it takes buds which he introduces into the life of the young trees. When vital connection is established, he calls his trees not by the name of seedlings, but by the name of the tree from which the bud was taken. They have become partakers really of the nature of that tree, and though but a tiny bud is all he has to show for it, they are thus called by that name.

We know further, that he soon cuts away the old and worthless part of the tree, leaving the bud to develop and bear its proper fruit. It *cannot* bear any other, and the whole tree is known by the bud; everything else is an excrescence, to be cut off. Should new shoots start out from the natural root, they have the character, the nature of the original seed, and would bear worthless fruit. This illustrates our Lord's words, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

One further passage claims our attention in connection with the subject of new birth. "According to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life" (Titus iii. 5–7). I have

quoted the connection as showing that the subject before the apostle includes more than new birth, going on to heirship, and taking in justification.

The word here is not the same as in the third chapter of John. It is the same word as is used in Matthew xix. 28, where it refers to the Millennium, the new surroundings for God's regenerate earthly people. Thus the cleansing in Titus is one which implants a new nature, and looks on to the full surroundings of the new creation. It would, I should say, include new birth and more.

I will merely, ere leaving this branch of our subject, remind you that this new birth is no light thing. It is not profession, nor is it *merely* repentance, but it is actual birth. Then, too, it is the sovereign, gracious act of God. It is not of the will of man, but of God. "Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth" (Jas. i. 18).

We now come to the subject of sealing, which we may well connect with what has gone before, for God does not leave His work without His stamp upon it. In the passage just quoted from Titus, you notice that we have not only the renewing of the Holy Ghost, but the shedding or pouring out of the Spirit. This leads us to what is now before us.

You have also noticed the prominent place that faith occupies. I need hardly mention this: "without faith it is impossible to please God." I will now quote a scripture, which, beginning with faith, passes on to something else: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory" (Eph. i. 13, 14).

Faith, here, has come by hearing the word of truth. The gospel of their salvation was preached and accepted

and Christ was trusted in. The souls were saved—justified and accepted before God. He now gives them the Holy Spirit, as promised, as a seal upon the work of Christ. The Spirit comes thus upon every believer, as the divine mark that he belongs to God.

It is beautiful to see how the sealing and the earnest go together. The same is seen in another scripture: "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts" (2 Cor., i. 22). The seal is the first thing the saved soul gets, and the inheritance is the last—for that is "reserved in heaven for us." But the Holy Spirit, a living, divine person, links these two together.

Another passage in Ephesians illustrates this: "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. iv. 30). How often is that verse misquoted and misunderstood by the saints of God. It is made to teach the very opposite of what it means, and simply by the addition of a single word, "away." "Add thou not unto His words lest He reprove thee and thou be found a liar" (Prov. xxx. 6). By the addition of this one little word this verse is made to teach that by sin we can grieve away the Holy Spirit, and this is embodied in verse and sung by multitudes:—

> "Return, O holy Dove, return,
> Sweet Messenger of rest!
> I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
> And drove Thee from my breast."

Could anything be more opposite to the truth? The Spirit abides with us forever, and the very verse tells us that we are sealed "unto the day of redemption." Sad indeed it is to grieve, by bitterness or malice, that Heavenly Guest, but sadder far would it be if He were to leave us, for that would mean the denial of Christ's work, and our eternal undoing.

Blessed be God! He abides with us forever, and binds

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together, by His presence, the first acceptance of light with its final consummation in glory.

He is called, as we have seen, the earnest of the inheritance. In a passage which looks on to the resurrection glories, the apostle says: "Now, He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit" (2 Cor., v. 5). An earnest is both a pledge and a foretaste of the inheritance. It was a part payment, which, being accepted, was a pledge that all would be given. To give and receive earnest-money bound both buyer and seller. So the sealing of the Spirit binds—may we say?—our blessed God to fulfil His promise. How poor such language is, and yet it shows the security of the weakest believer, who now can sing:—

> "And we to the end shall endure,
> As sure as the earnest is given;
> More happy, but not more secure,
> The spirits departed to heaven."

But more: the earnest was a part payment in kind. The full payment would be of the same character as the earnest. So we are said to have received "the first-fruits of the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 23). Greatly rejoicing, and yet now for a season in heaviness through manifold trials, as Peter says. The first-fruits of the Spirit remind us of those fruits of the land brought by the spies to their brethren yet in the wilderness. To faith, those fruits were the pledge that the inheritance was theirs; but they were also a sample of the fruits yielded by that good land.

So now, the Spirit is the foretaste, here in this wilderness world, of the joys and delights of heaven. Every view of the love of God, every unfolding of His grace, every manifestation of the beauties of Christ, all the sweets of "the fellowship of kindred minds"—these and all else of the precious witness of that Holy One, are

foretastes of the coming feast. These Eshcol grapes are but a cluster of fruit from the tree of life in the midst of the Paradise of God, the tree that grows by the River of water of Life, in the Heavenly City, our home.

> "Eshcol's grapes the story tell
> Of where our path doth lead."

But let us return for a little to this type of sealing, to gather more clearly its meaning and get more of the comfort of it. Looking through our Bibles for Scripture examples, we meet with several that certainly are most suggestive.

When Esther had obtained grace at the hands of king Ahasuerus, and was to undo as far as possible the evil which Haman had already been authorized to inflict upon her people, she was authorized to write a letter in the king's name and seal it with the king's ring, permitting the Jews to resist to the utmost all assaults upon them. This seal gave the full authorization of the king to the letter. It might be written in the faint, trembling hand of the woman, or in the strong hand of Mordecai, but what gave it authority and value was the seal of the king. A gentleman of wealth desires to give a check. His bookkeeper has left the office, and he gets an office boy to fill out name and amount on the blank form. The boy brings the check, written in his cramped, unsightly style, to the master, who signs it with his name. Is the check any less valuable because written by the boy? Would it be worth more if written in the firm, elegant hand of the bookkeeper? Not a cent more. The *name* of the gentleman authenticates it and imparts to it its full value, for which all his deposit in bank is responsible.

So with the seal of the Spirit. We are, in one way, but poorly written epistles of Christ. With some of us the handwriting is cramped and blotted, and with others faint and trembling; but, blessed be God, His signature

is ever the same, the Holy Ghost Himself! This authenticates us. Who dare say we do not belong to God; that we are not Christ's? It is only of those who have not the Spirit that it can be said, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9). But, as we have seen, the Spirit's seal is given upon faith in Christ.

A beautiful illustration of this occurs in the Levitical ordinances of the Old Testament. In the consecration of the priests and in the restoration of the leper, the blood of sacrifice was put upon ear and hand and foot, marking the whole man as redeemed (Lev. viii. 23; xiv. 14). After this application of the blood they were sprinkled with oil —type of the Spirit. Particularly in the case of the leper, we are told that the oil was put upon ear and hand and foot, *upon the blood.* So the Spirit of God seals us because of the blood, the work of Christ. It is not a matter of personal worthiness or of personal faithfulness, but of the value of the work of Christ. Have we rested in that? Then we are sealed—divinely authenticated as belonging to God—by His Spirit.

This gives special meaning and beauty to the words of king Ahasuerus, which I am glad to quote, because the book of Esther is much neglected by the Lord's people. "For the writing which is written in the king's name and sealed with the king's ring may no man reverse" (Esth. viii. 8). Think of that, ye trembling saints. Ye are sealed with the King's seal, confessed and owned as His.

A seal also secured from molestation. When Darius issued his hasty edict, based on pride, and Daniel came under its provisions, he could not alter it, for it was signed with his name (Dan. vi. 9). Therefore Daniel had to be cast into the den of lions, and the den was closed and sealed with the king's own signet (Dan. vi. 17). This was to guard the den from all molestation, whether by friend or foe. No one could tamper with Daniel. What

a comfort it is to know that we are thus guarded from all molestation by the presence of God's seal, the Holy Spirit. Everything that comes to us is of His permitting; nothing else can touch us. We are a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed (Song Sol. iv. 12), for the Lord's own use.

This thought is carried further in another scripture—the sealing of the 144,000 of Israel prior to the great tribulation (Rev. vii). The awful hour of trial was to try the dwellers upon earth. It was to be a time of trouble such as had never been seen in the earth; these saints were to be subjected to all manner of persecution, but not a hair of their heads was to perish, for they were sealed with the seal of the living God.

We, too, have been sealed, and through every form of trial, temptation, assault—yea, failure—we are kept inviolate. Satan may be permitted to sift us as he did Job and Peter, but the seal of the living God is the pledge of our being brought safely through all "unto the praise of His glory."

Once more, the seal was the sign of secrecy. A book sealed could not be opened and its contents read—as in Rev. v. 1, 2; Rev. x. 4; Dan. xii. 4, 9. So also the Lord's people are, in one sense, a special people. They are God's "hidden ones." The apostle writes of them, "Therefore the world knoweth us not, as it knew Him not" (1 John iii. 1). The world thinks it strange that we "run not with them to the same excess of riot" (1 Pet. iv. 4). The world cannot understand the secret of our joy, of our strength, of our growth, of our separation; for we are sealed, marked as peculiarly belonging to and understood by our blessed God. Thanks be to Him for His seal. "The Lord knoweth them that are His." Let us let the world read the other side of that seal (see 2 Tim. ii. 19).

The seal is, as we have seen, God's authentication of His people. It is His side, as it were. In beautiful symmetry, we have our side—the witness of the Spirit—and with this we close. Sealing is largely for others—for God, may we say; assurance is for us.

I will scarcely do more than quote several passages of Scripture consecutively, with little comment, for I think they will carry their meaning home without words of mine. Turn first to Romans viii. 15, 16. "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children (not *sons* here, as is usual with Paul) of God."

The Spirit bears testimony along with our own spirits. He has begotten us as children. We are born of the Spirit. He does not leave the child's feeble voice alone. We might often be tempted to doubt the testimony of our own renewed hearts, for the testimony is ofttimes very feeble; sometimes it is but the *cry* of the child—"an infant crying in the night, and with no language but a cry." But the Spirit unites His mighty testimony with the feebleness of ours. He bears witness *with* our spirits that we are the children of God, and gives His value to both testimonies. Can we then doubt?

The spirit of bondage to fear has left us, and in the consciousness of our sonship and as born of God, we turn in the spirit of adoption to Him, saying in the home language (Hebrew) Abba, that is, Father. How sweet is that word to the Father's ears. Do any of you that is a father ever forget the thrill when you heard your babe's first lisping of that word? "Because ye are sons God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 5).

But the testimony of the Spirit goes further than the

assurance of sonship. Let us read another verse: "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Cor. ii. 12). Here the full treasure-house of God's gifts of love are thrown open to us, and as we in wonder gaze at one and another the Spirit assures us they are all ours. We *know* the things that are freely given to us of God; we understand them, and have the full assurance that they are ours.

But how does the Spirit bear this testimony? A passage in 1 John shows us (chapter v. 7–13) which I will read from the Revised Version, as giving us what is known to be the true text, into which some additions have crept in our ordinary versions. "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which He hath witnessed concerning His Son: He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in him(self): he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar; because he hath not believed in the witness that God hath borne concerning His Son. And the witness is this, that God gave unto us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath the life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life. These things have I written unto you that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God."

What a holy, blessed scripture! The witness of the Holy Spirit, the Truth, with the water, His work in regeneration, and the blood, Christ's work for us. He unites His witness to give us complete certainty. We receive human testimony not half so well authenticated; shall we doubt the witness of the God of truth and make Him a

liar? God hath borne witness concerning His Son, that every one who believes in Him *hath* life. The believer has the witness in his own spirit, but here is the added testimony of the God of truth. He that hath the Son hath the life.

And all this is *written* in the word of God for our assurance. It is not left to changing feelings, or dubious experiences, or faltering footsteps, in the Lord's path. These could never give assurance. But the living word of the living God, brought home to the soul by the Holy Spirit—*that* is the witness of the Spirit; and that gives assurance.

Thus, beloved brethren, we have traced in a weak and partial way what I have called the Spirit's work in salvation, or, if you please, the effectual work of the Spirit. We have seen it begin in the deep work of conviction of sin, righteousness and judgment, leading the trembling soul to turn with repentance and faith to that Saviour whom he had so long despised and rejected. We saw that this faith marked the new birth of the soul. This new birth we saw to be characterized by the impartation of a life from God with a sinless nature. We next saw that every believer received the seal of the Spirit—the pledge and sample of our inheritance until the day of redemption—God's mark of ownership, of protection through all this life, and of separation from the world. We have just concluded, by dwelling upon the witness of the Spirit to us, that we are the children of God. May we not take to our homes and wherever we go that sweet assurance? If there be one doubting believer—strange combination!—will *you* not now take up the Spirit's word, and cry "Abba, Father."

"FATHER, we commend our spirits
To Thy love, in Jesus' name,

Love which His atoning merits
Give us confidence to claim.

Oh how sweet, how real a pleasure
Flows from love so full and free!
'Tis a vast exhaustless treasure,
Saviour, we possess in Thee!

From the world and its confusion,
Here we turn and find our rest,—
From its care and its delusion,
Turn to Thee, in whom we're blest.

By the Holy Ghost anointed,
May we do the Father's will,
Walk the path by Him appointed,
All His pleasure to fulfil."

LECTURE III

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SANCTIFICATION:—

INDWELLING; COMMUNION; ANOINTING; PRAYER; THE WALK IN THE SPIRIT.

"O GRACIOUS FATHER! God of Love,
We own Thy power to save,—
That power by which the Shepherd rose
Victorious o'er the grave.

Him from the dead Thou brought'st again,
When, by His sacred blood
Confirmed and sealed for evermore,
Th' eternal cov'nant stood.

O may Thy Spirit guide our souls,
And mould them to Thy will,
That from Thy paths we ne'er may stray
But keep Thy precepts still.

That to the Saviour's stature full
We nearer still may rise,
And all we think, and all we do,
Be pleasing in Thine eyes."

OUR subject to-night is, "The Holy Spirit in sanctification," and it will be well for us before entering upon our theme to note the various uses of the word santification in Scripture, and its significance in connection with what is directly before us.

We will read first a verse from the tenth chapter of Hebrews, verse 10: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all;" also verse 14: "For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." Here, sanctifi-

cation is declared to be by the one offering of Christ in death; it is perfect and eternal in its efficacy. If by "perfect sanctification" this were meant, we would all express our belief in it; yea, we would as believers in the Lord Jesus claim to be perfectly sanctified.

But evidently this sanctification is outside and not within ourselves. It is a sanctification by position. We were formerly aliens, away from God, and under the guilt of all our sins. Through the blood of Christ our Lord we have been made nigh—taken from our position of distance and set apart to God as belonging to Him. This is the general theme of Hebrews, together with priesthood. Thus you have, "He that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified" (chap. ii. 11). "For if the blood of bulls and goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, . . . purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (chap. ix. 13, 14). So also even the apostate is spoken of as having been sanctified by the blood of the covenant (chap. x. 29), that is he was set apart, outwardly in his case, as belonging to a people connected with the blood of the covenant. The allusion is to the blood of the first covenant, spoken of in chap. ix. 19, 20. In Ex. xxiv. 8, we see that Moses did this in connection with the legal covenant; the people engaged to be obedient. Under grace there is a new covenant and a better sacrifice, even the precious blood of Christ. It sanctified, or set apart, men to God. Where the faith was real, the sanctification or setting apart was real; and where it was mere profession, a dreadful responsibility was incurred.

In the Old Testament, this use of sanctification was constant. Israel was a sanctified people, in the sense of being set apart as God's. Even where true grace has wrought, the sanctification by blood does not refer to its

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work in us, but for us. Thus the precious passage: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin," does not refer to inward purity, but to the removal of guilt, so that the soul is without spot or stain.

But we are also said to be sanctified by the Spirit. Thus, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 2). "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? . . . and such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 9–11). Now these passages, while referring to sanctification by the Spirit, contemplate new birth, rather than the subsequent life of the believer. In Peter the work of the Spirit is connected with, or follows after, the Father's election. Sanctification, or new birth, is unto obedience. That is, we are born again—set apart to God by regeneration, in order that we may now walk in obedience, and it is this that was contemplated in the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus. As obedient, we are in a position to enjoy what is meant by sprinkling—the atonement. How many of God's children do not enjoy this.

So in the passage in 1 Corinthians: "Ye are sanctified," is evidently the work of new birth, as justification is on the ground of Christ's work. Every child of God is sanctified in this way, by the Spirit's work. The ordinary designation of believers is, "saints," or sanctified ones. They are saints by calling, by blood and by new birth. Thrice perfectly sanctified, by the work of Father, Son, and Spirit. We would not speak of them as saints because of their walk, because that is not perfect, and is variable in different persons. They are "sanctified in Christ Jesus."

There is, however, another use of the word sanctifica-

tion, and that is to describe the practical daily life. The standard is Christ Himself, and who that knows Him would say that he had been fully conformed to the Lord's image? If a Paul, with his devotedness, love, and apprehension of Christ could say, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect," how much more should we. We are perfectly sanctified by the blood of Christ, setting us apart to God in all its value; perfectly sanctified by new birth, in which we have received a new and sinless nature. But there is a practical work in us which is progressive. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit. Such scriptures as the following contemplate this progressive sanctification: "Of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom—even righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30); "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth" (John xvii. 17). It is with this that we are to be engaged to-night.

I will first call your attention to the truth of the indwelling of the Spirit—a subject upon which we touched in the first lecture, as being one of the characteristics of the Spirit's presence and work during the present dispensation. It is for us now to go more fully into detail, for in this indwelling of the Spirit lies all the possibility for practical sanctification.

There is a passage in the Old Testament which is beautifully typical of this sanctification by the Sprit's indwelling. "This shall be a continual burnt-offering . . . at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation before the Lord, where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee. And there I will meet with the children of Israel, and the tabernacle shall be sanctified by my glory" (Ex. xxix. 42, 43).

We have already seen that the cloud or Shekinah, the visible emblem of the presence of God, was the type of

the Holy Spirit. This cloud led them through the desert, and after the tabernacle was erected, it descended, and filled the sanctuary. The tabernacle was sanctified, set apart for the service of God, by this glory. Everything that was inconsistent with that glory was put out, and the whole house was ordered according to the requirements of the holiness of God. You will also notice that this glory took up its abode in connection with the burnt-offering. Christ's work is the basis of the Spirit's presence.

Thus the believer, as temple of the Holy Ghost, is sanctified by that presence. He is marked out as belonging to God, and everything inconsistent with His holy will should find no place in the heart or life. We see then how the truth of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit must occupy a prominent place in any consideration of the subject of His sanctifying work.

Read, if you please, the following: "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Conforter, that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth" (John xiv. 16, 17). We have already considered this indwelling as contrasted with the visitations of the Spirit in the previous dispensations. What is for our special attention now, is the permanence of this indwelling: "He shall abide with you forever." All is stability and permanence in the new era of reality, for all is based upon a finished redemption and Christ taking His place on high. The law must be set aside, for it was "weak through the flesh." Its ceremonies were but shadows of good things to come. Man in the flesh was under trial, in the sense that he had not been judicially pronounced worthless.

But when Christ died, He not only provided a perfect atonement, but by His death sentence was pronounced upon the whole human race. Sin in the flesh was con-

demned; our old man was crucified with Him, and its worthlessness declared. Now, "if any man be in Christ there is a new creation, old things are passed away, behold all things are become new." I do not touch the fact of the presence of the old nature, and the deeds of the body to be mortified; but there is a new man, who has life eternal. Everything here is of God, and the Spirit will have no occasion to leave for there are no conditions upon which He remains, save the fact of accomplished redemption.

Did you ever think of the awful dishonor done not only to the Spirit of God, but to Christ by the denial of the perpetuity of this abiding? If the Spirit could leave, after having taken up His abode in us, it would involve a denial of the work of Christ. His work would have ceased to avail before God. It would drag Christ from His throne in glory, if the Spirit could depart from a believer.

It cannot be too clearly understood that this indwelling is not because of anything in us, either at the beginning, or at any stage of the Christian life. From first to last, the Spirit dwells with us because of the unchanging value of the work of Christ. Cease forever to dishonor the value of that work by doubting the presence of this Holy Person. Your feelings, your faithfulness have nothing to do with this basic fact.

But what holy ground we are upon here! If Solomon could ask the wondering question: "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth?" when His visible glory filled the temple (2 Chron. v. 14; vi. 18), what shall we say when the living God in the person of the Holy Ghost comes to abide in us? My brethren, I am persuaded we little realize what this means. If we did, what lowliness would mark us; what abhorrence of sin, what quickness in the fear of the Lord, and the detection of

the most subtle forms of evil, what reverence. Who can describe the sanctifying effect of simply a deep realization of the stupendous fact. I can but speak of it, and pray that all of us may know practically what the consciousness of this abiding would bring.

Let us turn to another scripture: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of (or from) Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" (John xvi. 13, 14). I do not question that this promise had its first fulfilment in the inspiration and guidance of the apostles. But to limit it to this would be to rob us of the preciousness of the greater part of this discourse. In fact, it is impossible to conceive of this. Fruitfulness and all else spoken of in the fifteenth and other chapters, surely is not limited to apostles.

This scripture teaches us the character of this indwelling of the Spirit, how He operates. I will ask you to notice particularly that He works by the truth. He guides into all truth. God is light, and when He takes up His abode He must enlighten. "Holiness of truth" is an expression in the epistle to the Ephesians that suggests how it is secured. It is by the truth; even as our Lord prayed, "Sanctify them through Thy truth, Thy word is truth."

It is the spirit of man that understands, and this is the highest part of his being, controlling all the rest. This is God's order, and when the Spirit engages in His sanctifying work, it is through the action of truth. You will notice that again and again; we will return to this fact. Spiritual intelligence is the very corner stone of piety. The dictum of Rome, "Ignorance is the mother of devotion," is as far removed from truth as it is possible to

conceive. The lines of teaching as to the Spirit's work cross and recross, and we will find that the points of intersection are at *truth*.

The truth of God is embodied in His word. In that we have the full revelation which He has been pleased to make of Himself and His counsels, centering in Christ. This is not the time to enter upon this subject, but I am increasingly convinced of its overwhelming importance. The word of God—the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments—is the vehicle of the Holy Spirit, the instrument which He uses. The spiritual condition of a person may largely be gauged by his estimation of the word of God. If that be neglected, or thought lightly of, no matter how high the pretensions, how ecstatic the feelings, how deep apparently the piety, there is not much true work of the Spirit of God. *He* ever honors the word of God.

Joshua is a figure of Christ, but we might say of Christ in us by the Spirit, for he led Israel in person. The Spirit it is who leads us into the practical enjoyment of our portion in Christ. This portion is described in the word of God. May we not say that, for faith, the believer's portion *is* the word of God? And is not the constant word of the Spirit "There remaineth very much land to be possessed"? Ah, what a fulness there is in that Word! Let us not be slothful in making it our own, under the guiding energy of the Spirit of truth.

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free," will be our connecting link with the next scripture I wish to read. The truth emancipates. "The law of the Spirit, of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2). Here we have the emancipating power of the indwelling Spirit.

You who have studied the epistle to the Romans are aware that this eighth chapter occurs in the second por-

tion of the book. The first deals with the question of sins, our actual trespasses, and of our justification from them all by faith without the deeds of the law, on the ground of the sacrifice of Christ our Lord. We have peace with God, access to His presence and joy in Him.

In the second portion of the epistle, from the middle of the fifth chapter through the eighth, you have the subject of sin, the principle of evil which controls the natural man. As linked with the first Adam, head of a fallen race, we have inherited a nature alienated from God and prone to corruption. It is also a blessed fact that we are now linked with a second Man, Head of a new race, and have life in Him. But here is sin—is it to reign in me? Here is holiness—is it not for me?

The sixth and seventh chapters develop the truth that emancipates. The cross is the end of me judicially; "Our old man is crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. vi. 6). Thus we are dead to sin in the death of Christ, and are to reckon ourselves so, and alive unto God in Christ Jesus. God has put the stamp of death upon me as part of the old creation, so that faith can now say, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet no longer I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20). But this death puts me out of the reach of law, not only as that which condemns, but as a rule for man in the flesh.

Into the struggles of the seventh chapter I do not enter, beyond stating the bare fact that so long as the soul seeking holiness turns to the law it finds the bonds of sin drawn tighter, for "the strength of sin is the law" (1 Cor. xv. 56). The law cannot afford help; sin, by the commandment, becomes exceeding sinful, but there can come no help from the knowledge of this. The two natures are recognized, and two laws, but still no deliv-

erance; and "Oh, wretched man that I am!" is the bitter cry.

But the way of escape is seen, and the life in Christ Jesus is a life of liberty. This we reach in the beginning of the eighth chapter. Here is freedom; no longer a hopeless, unavailing cry, but the calm after the storm, and it is the Spirit who has given that deliverance by the truth. Instead of the law we have the Spirit, and all through the eighth chapter it is the Spirit. Thus we have deliverance by the Spirit. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Once more, let us note another feature of this indwelling. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again; but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John iv. 13, 14). In the previous chapter our Lord uses water as a type of the Word—the Word used by the Spirit—for cleansing the soul. That cleansing is not the "putting away the filth of the flesh," the reforming of the natural man, for the sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mire. But the cleansing is that of a new life, a new nature—a new thing entirely, and therefore perfect and complete.

Here, in the interview with the woman of Samaria, the water is used as a type of the Spirit, but as that which ministers life, and refreshing. "We have been made to *drink* into one Spirit." The figure is different, but equally clear, and most precious. I cannot do better than to trace this figure in the Old Testament, as seen in Israel's history. This will enable us to see the beautiful appropriateness of the figure used by our Lord with this poor sinful woman. But first let us listen to His words just prior: "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again." On every fountain—broken cisterns, are they

not?—of man's digging we may write these words. No matter where man turns for refreshment, he fails to find that which can truly quench thirst; pleasure, reputation, power, wealth—whatever the heart of man craves—can never satisfy. As in the book of Ecclesiastes, those who have most diligently drawn water out of these wells have been constrained to confess "vanity of vanities." Let us as Christians take note of this and refuse that which does not satisfy even the world.

> 'Whom have we, Lord, but Thee,
> Soul-thirst to satisfy?
> Exhaustless spring! the waters free!
> All other streams are dry."

You remember that shortly after Israel's emancipation from Egypt, when scarcely had the echoes of the song of triumph died out, they had to face the question of thirst. There was no water in the desert, the very place where without it they must die. So they murmur and begin to learn something of the trials by the way; but Marah and Elim teach them some lessons—true refreshment and sustenance come by way of the cross. But they seem not to have learned this lesson fully till they come to Rephidim (Ex. xvii). Here the rock is smitten and the waters flow out. I need hardly point out the lovely type. "That Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x. 4). Christ, smitten of God for our sins, sends forth the Holy Ghost for our refreshment. The Rock smitten insures safety and the abundant supply for all our needs in the wilderness, through the Holy Spirit.

We link with this the similar scene in the book of Numbers (Chap. xx.). In the wilderness of Zin the water fails, and God tells Moses to go out and *speak* to the rock. A hasty word, a failure to obey God, a marring of what he intended to teach us, and Moses shut out of the land —these are the results. But by his very failure the lesson

is simply emphasized. Once the rock was smitten; that is never needed again. "So Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many." No need for that to be repeated, "then must he often have suffered." All that is necessary ever after is to "speak to the Rock." It is through the ministry of the Word that Christ is ministered in the refreshing power of the Holy Spirit.

Lastly, near the close of the journey (Num. xxi. 16–18), we have the well, of which God said: "Gather the people together and I will give them water." They sing a song at this well—"Spring up, O well, sing ye unto it"—for joy and praise follow the opening up of channels for the Spirit to flow forth. This well is dug with the staves of the princes—pilgrim wands opening up the refreshing streams.

Thus the refreshing power of the Spirit all through our life is set forth in the water. To the woman of Samaria, seeking satisfaction in the pleasures of sin and the world, He promises not only the gift of a draught of water, but a well springing up evermore. As in new birth we have the bestowal of life by the Spirit, so here we have Him dwelling in us, maintaining and developing the life.

In the 110th Psalm it is said of our Lord: "Thou hast the dew of Thy youth." His vigor and freshness are perennial, eternal. To Ephesus it was said: "Thou hast left thy first love." They had lost the freshness that marked the early stages of the divine life in the soul. Of how many, beloved brethren, must this be said! No outward fall has marred their testimony; they are above reproach, and in many ways commendably zealous; but there is no "dew." Truth has taken clear form, doctrines can be distinctly stated, a keen scent for error is present; but oh, where is that freshness which ever marked our adorable Lord?

Therefore, ere leaving this part of our subject I have

dwelt upon this. We have a well in us, an inexhaustible supply.

"Within us dwells that well from heaven,
The Spirit of our God."

But as in Isaac's day the Philistines choked the wells which his father Abraham had dug, so now formalism chokes the upspringing of the Spirit, and we lose the refreshment the blessed Spirit of God would ever give. The Spirit is in us, just as the water is in the wells, but the stones prevent our getting at it for practical uses. There is nothing for us but to return to the first love, to dig again, to open up again the channels for the welling up of the Spirit. God does not give His Spirit by measure, and if we are straitened it is in ourselves.

Thus we have looked at four features which characterize the indwelling of the Spirit; first, the permanency of it, "He shall abide with you forever"; second, the enlightenment of it, "He shall guide you into all truth"; third, the liberty of it, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death"; and lastly, the freshness of it, "a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." Surely, with such abounding fulness, our sanctification should be deep and full and complete.

"Lord, 'tis enough we ask no more;
Thy grace around us pours
Its rich and unexhausted store,
And all its joy is ours."

As I have already said, we will find many of our lines of search intersecting, and I feel this is especially true of the subject of communion. In one sense we hardly need devote a special section to it, for it permeates our entire subject; and yet it is a word of such frequent use, and withal so little apprehended, that a few words as to it will be in place here.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all" (2 Cor. xiii. 14). "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit . . . fulfil ye my joy" (Phil. ii. 1, 2). Here we have the expression, "communion of the Spirit," and it evidently has an important significance.

The word occurs in a number of passages through the New Testament, and in various connections. Thus we have fellowship or communion (the same word in the Greek) of God's Son, of His body and blood, of His sufferings; with the Father and His Son. Here evidently the thought is sharing in the benefits, or in the experiences, or in the companionship. Similarly we have the same root used in such passages as "they were *partners* with Simon," "*partakers* of the altar," "companions of those who suffered," "partaker of the glory," "partakers of the divine nature." The liberality of the saints was called fellowship.

Now the meaning all through is clear and consistent. Communion means sharing or participating. So the communion of the Holy Spirit means sharing or participating in His thoughts, affections, purposes. I may sit on the same seat with a person on a train, riding miles side by side, and yet have no communion, because we are strangers. Or I may know him to be an ungodly, worldly person, and therefore have no communion with him, because we have nothing in common. On the other hand, I may meet a perfect stranger, and in a few minutes find we can enjoy full communion, because he is a child of God and one who loves His word. We have a common life and common objects, and that makes communion.

Thus we have life by the Spirit and a common object with the Spirit—Christ; so we share and participate with

Him in our little measure. That I believe to be the main factor in communion. Many Christians have a very unhealthy, distorted idea of communion. They think of a dreamy sort of life, elevated far above its common duties and affairs, the soul in rapt gaze looking heavenward, the body chiefly prostrate in the attitude of prayer. This thought has peopled the convents and monasteries with those who thought communion too holy a thing to come even in outward contact with this world.

But even where such extremes are not reached, how many twist the thought of communion into a certain state of feeling, or into certain strange and rare experiences. Many would say they have no time for communion; business or family cares press too much. But how unhealthy is all this! How forced and unnatural! Whereas the communion of the Holy Spirit is simply sharing in His thoughts. If the word of God engages us, if the love of Christ attracts us, if the will of God controls us, that is participation with the blessed Spirit. We are often too much engaged with the *results* of communion, rather than the fact. Joy, freedom, exultation—all flow from communion. The great thing is to be practically sharing with that blessed One what He is ever ministering to our souls.

When we come later to look at the walk in the Spirit we will look at the practical side of this communion and the hindrances to it. Let it suffice here to say that there is never any excuse for the Christian not to be enjoying this communion of the Spirit. The busiest are not debarred from it, and it is the strength of the weakest. Love is the atmosphere of communion—the love of God. And this love is shed abroad—poured out—in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Rom. v. 5). Let our hearts expand under the warmth of that infinite, tender love; let them revel in it, be at home in it; "keep yourselves in the love of God." That is communion. Fear is cast out;

sin can have no place in the life where the love of God is enthroned. Remember, it is His, not *our*, love.

Our next subject is the Anointing of the Spirit, under which a number of Scriptures demand our consideration. Let us first trace the Scripture use of the term. I might say, first of all, there are two words, one in Hebrew and one in Greek, that are the chief words used respectively in the Old and New Testaments. They are the words of which our terms Messiah and Christ are the English equivalents. And this will, I think, give us the first great and prominent thought of anointing. Messiah or Christ means the Anointed One. Other words are used both in Hebrew and Greek, but they are of secondary prominence, and, so far as I am aware, are never used in the way we find the others. This certainly is suggestive.

"Thou shalt take the anointing oil and pour it upon his head and anoint him" (Ex. xxix. 7). This is the anointing of Aaron to be high priest. "And thou shalt take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is therein; and shalt hallow it and all the vessels thereof, and it shall be holy" (Ex. xl. 9). This is the anointing of the tabernacle and all its furniture. The same was to be done to the altar of burnt offering and the laver to sanctify them. "Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward" (1 Sam. xvi. 13). Here it is as king he is being anointed. "And Elisha, the son of Shaphat, shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room" (1 Kings xix. 16). This last is striking as being the only case where the anointing of a prophet is spoken of. Elisha was a successor to Elijah, and so was to be officially designated. As a rule there was no successor to a prophet; he was called of God for a specific purpose, and none could take his place.

These various instances, which are samples of their kind, give us the significance of anointing. It was setting apart to a specific position or office. Thus the priest and king were anointed, set apart to their respective offices. A similar thought lies in the anointing of the tabernacle and its furniture; it was set apart, sanctified, for the special and exclusive service of God. Christ is both Priest and King. "He shall sit a priest upon His throne." Thus doubly does the title Messiah or Christ belong to Him

Passing to the New Testament, I quote from Acts x. 38: "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil, for God was with Him." Here we have not only a definite and official designation of our Lord, but, it is added, "with power." May not the *horn* of oil in the anointing of David have suggested the power? The word for power here is not the one usually to be rendered "authority," but is the ordinary one for strength or might. Thus our Lord was not only designated, but qualified, for His work.

Turning now to the saint, we have first a general statement that he is anointed. "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God" (2 Cor. i. 21). This is not apostolic anointing, but, as the term "with you" shows, common to all saints, as in the next verse. We have nothing definite here save the significant expression, "stablisheth us with you in Christ." The connection is suggestive: all in Christ are anointed —officially designated as His.

But there is something more specific in our next quotation: "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things." "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any

man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1 John ii. 20, 27). Connected with this unction from the Holy One is the knowledge of all things. You will observe here a point of intersection with the other lines of this truth, and it is in connection with the word of God. "He shall guide you into all truth." Possessing this knowledge, the saint is able to discern error, and he needs no one to teach him.

I need hardly say this does not refer to Christian teaching. The text has been abused by some to deny the need of God-given teachers. This is not the thought at all. But we have received an anointing from God—we need no human teaching, only divine. Some one comes to you and claims to have discovered some wondrous truth in Theosophy, Spiritism, Christian Science. You are not to be tempted to inquire; the unction you have already received teaches you. There is nothing beyond that.

Notice, too, it is the babe who has this unction. It is no question of attainment, or even of experience; it is a divine instinct enabling us to detect and refuse error. We recognize it as not truth, for it does not give us the Christ of God; therefore we reject it. This anointing abides in us and teaches us to abide in Christ our Lord.

Gathering up these thoughts, we shall find, at least so far as we have gone, a distinct meaning of the anointing of the Spirit. For Christ, it was His official designation for the place to which God had appointed Him, Priest and King, and his qualification in power for the place. For the saint, it is the distinct designation, in the gift of the Spirit, that he belongs to God, and a qualification to live here in separation from all evil. By the fact of my anointing I am set apart to God. I am His for the ser-

vice to which He has called me. The anointing oil is upon me, and abides. Nor is this a mere past, formal act; but a living Person who guides, teaches, empowers me for everything I meet. Above all, the Holy One teaches me to abide in Christ, to cleave fast to Him.

As I have said, there are other words, both in Old and New Testaments, translated "anoint," whose use is also suggestive. We have, for instance, "Thou anointest my head with oil" (Ps. xxiii. 5). See also 2 Chron. xxviii. 15, where the captives of Judah are reclothed, fed and anointed, and then returned to Jericho to their brethren; Ezek. xvi. 9, where God's adorning of Israel is spoken of. Also Isaiah lxi. 3, where the "oil of joy" is given instead of mourning, reminding us of the oil which maketh man's face to shine. All these and many others are most suggestive; adornment, honor, joy, are all the results of our having been anointed by the Spirit. I only suggest a few passages; others will occur to you, and the concordance will show more. The Holy Oil is upon us, dear brethren, and we are not our own. I leave the question of service for another time.

There are just three Scriptures as to prayer in connection with the Holy Spirit that I wish to read. First, however, I will ask if you have ever noticed that there is no instance in Scripture of prayer *to* the Spirit. That He is divine, is God, we saw at the outset; and yet He is never addressed in prayer. Now, there is a divine reason for this which is clear and beautiful when once you see it. The Spirit is *here;* as to His work, He is *in us.* He forms and guides our prayers; He is *in* them, and therefore they are not addressed *to* Him. Once this fact is grasped, and we will see the unscripturalness of addressing the Holy Spirit. He is the one who, as it were, is speaking in us. Let it not be thought for a moment that this degrades this blessed Holy One. We know He

is divine, is omnipresent. We know when we address God, He is God. But I speak of His distinctive place and work in this present dispensation. He dwells in the Church, and in the believer. He is the power for all service, prayer and praise, but not the object.

Read first, Romans viii. 26, 27; "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, that He maketh intercession for the saints according to God." Christ is our intercessor on high; "He ever liveth to make intercession for us;" and the Holy Spirit is our intercessor down here. You have been struck with this double provision. The gifts of the Spirit, in 1 Corinthians xii., are in Ephesians iv. the gifts of Christ on high. In the first case it is administration; in the latter, source. In somewhat the same way, Christ is before God maintaining us through all our journey, in all our weakness. Our great High Priest ever liveth, and, in the beautiful language of the type, bears His people, graven in the jewels of His own glory, upon His shoulders of strength and His heart of love.

That is the heavenly side. On earth there are sighs and groans as we feebly and in much ignorance lift our hearts to God. But there is a mighty intercessor within, leading us unconsciously to prayer. And our blessed God understands these inarticulate groanings. Have you ever felt your inability for prayer? Words have failed, and under the pressure of a groaning creation in which we live you have been mute. You had no words to frame the deep yearnings of your heart over a lost world—over a Christless crowd passing on to eternity; or other loads pressed heavily, and as you have bowed before God there was more groaning than speaking. Well, beloved, these

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were doubtless the intercession of the Spirit, leading you out in prayer beyond yourself, and giving voice in a language understood by God alone. The Spirit helpeth our infirmities. What a comfort! He is the helper. The weakest of us can pray with such assistance. And God, who searches the heart, knows the Spirit's desires, even if the saints in their infirmity have not given clear utterance to them. He knows that the Spirit maketh intercession according to God.

"But ye beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God" (Jude 20, 21). Here we have prayer in the Spirit—in the wisdom and power of the Spirit. In Jude everything is in ruins; apostasy, the history of which he traces from the fall of the angels to the present, has set in. False professors, a blot upon the Church, have crept in—the days of Enoch and of Noah are repeated. In the midst of all this chaos the saints are to stand firm. Because of the love of many waxing cold, all the greater need for them to keep themselves built up and established.

In this steadfastness there are four features—building themselves up on their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keeping themselves in the love of God, and looking for the coming of the Lord. Here prayer is a most important part, but it is prayer in the Holy Ghost. There is all the reality which the Spirit gives, as well as the intelligence and discernment which He affords; and there is the persistence. If there is to be stability, it must be in the power of the Spirit of God. All else will fail—human strength and human wisdom all falter here. But He who has this living link with God perseveres unto the end. There is a vast difference between formal prayer and praying in the Holy Ghost. None but those indwelt by the Spirit can truly pray.

In Romans our infirmities were dwelt upon, and the Spirit helping them. In Jude stability was the prominent thought in view of abounding evil. We reach another stage in Ephesians vi. 17, 18: "And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." Here it is conflict. The entire passage gives the familiar picture of the Christian engaged in conflict with the hosts of evil. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. It is no human adversary whom we are called to withstand, but Satan and the wicked spirits in heavenly places. These would rob us of the enjoyment of our portion, either keeping us from taking possession of it by faith or snatching it from our grasp after we had laid hold of it.

In this conflict there are various weapons of defense, and one of offense, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word, or saying, of God. When mention of the word of God is made it is quickly followed by prayer, for the two go together. You remember, in the "Pilgrim's Progress," how, in an apparently hopeless conflict with Apollyon, Christian betakes himself to a weapon called "all-prayer," and the enemy is forced to take his flight. Ah, brethren, if we are to be victors in this unequal contest, it is in the power of the Spirit. There must be dependence and prayer. Coupled with it is watching and intercession for all saints. It is only in the power of the Spirit that we can thus fight or pray. Left to ourselves, we would fall an easy prey to this mighty foe. But thank God that in the very time of greatest weakness the Spirit leads out our hearts in believing prayer.

Prayer in the Spirit! Do we pray thus? Are our seasons of private prayer, or public, under the particular guidance and power and faith of the Spirit of God? How little true prayer there is, and yet how many words! The Lord stir us up to know this three-fold blessedness of

prayer in the Spirit, our infirmities helped, our faith established, and our courage emboldened to take fast hold of the living God, while we use the sword of the Spirit.

The last division of our subject to-night will be the walk in the Spirit, under which we may gather some of the fragments which have been thus far overlooked or neglected. The walk in the Spirit is what characterizes the Christian, and is in contrast with the walk in the flesh. "They that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh, and they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Broadly, we may say every Christian is marked thus. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ—that is, not the disposition of Christ, but the Holy Spirit given to the believer—he is none of His.

The remainder of the eighth chapter is devoted to the walk in the power of the Spirit. The body is dead because of sin. It has been the servant of sin, and its natural appetites have been followed; the body is now looked upon as a dead thing whose appetites and lusts are no longer to be provided for. We are to mortify—put to death—the deeds of the body. On the other hand, we have a living principle within. "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." There is a new nature controlling the spirit, the highest part of man, and the result is a practical walk in righteousness. Moreover, the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is the pledge of the renovation of the body. It will be raised up at the Lord's coming, or, should we be living, changed and so conformed to His blessed likeness. What a triumph of grace! Our poor bodies, with the proofs of the fall upon them, will be redeemed from the bondage of corruption, and along with a groaning creation be brought into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

Meanwhile we are led of the Spirit, have the witness of the Spirit, can pray in the Spirit, and are quietly waiting

for that hope—the coming of our Lord. Whatever our ignorance may be, we know that all things work together for our good. Yea, we can look back into the past eternity and link our predestined conformation to the image of His Son, with its actual accomplishment in glory yet to come. And between these we have the love of Christ, from which nothing can separate us. Such, beloved brethren, is a meagre glimpse at this wondrous 8th of Romans. Blessed be God for such a pathway of liberty until we behold the face of Him who loves us.

From what we have been dwelling upon you will rightly conclude that the walk of the child of God should be, so far as sin is concerned, one uninterrupted progress from strength to strength. The pathway of the just is as the bright light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Such, indeed, is the provision of grace, and such in some measure is the experience of His people. Alas! we must turn for a little from this brightness to inquire why it is not always thus with all His saints.

Recurring to a passage we were considering under the subject of new birth—"that which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit"—we find that the impartation of the new nature does not obliterate the old. To be sure, we are known by our new nature—the old man is crucified; but there is the presence of the flesh, which is incapable of alteration.

One of the great mistakes made by the saints is this effort to sanctify the flesh. The apostle goes into it in the second chapter of Colossians: "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances . . . after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility and neglecting of the body (not in a certain honor), to the satisfaction of the flesh." Such is the ren-

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dering of a very correct version,* and it affords a most striking illustration of the result of all efforts to improve the flesh. All keeping of ordinances—"touch not, taste not, handle not"—are satisfying to the flesh.

We can make the flesh moral—we can even make it religious—but we *cannot* make it please God. Thus the seeker after holiness in the flesh may starve or mortify his body and merely please the flesh—puff himself up with pride. "They that are Christ's have *crucified* the flesh with the affections and lusts" (Gal. v. 24). A crucified thing is not to be bettered or sanctified. We are, on the contrary, to *abstain*—hold off—from fleshly lusts that war against the soul (1 Pet. ii. 11). To strive against it is but to repeat the hopeless struggle of the seventh of Romans. The only remedy is the walk in the Spirit, with the flesh in its true place—"no confidence in the flesh."

But through carelessness we fail to "mortify the deeds of the body;" we give room to the flesh, and even make provision for it to fulfil its lust. As a result, the Holy Spirit is grieved. Mark, he is not grieved *away*—that could never be; but He can no longer occupy us with our Lord; He must occupy us with our failures. You will notice that grieving the Spirit is connected particularly (Eph. iv. 30) with those forms of fleshly indulgence most common among Christians—malice, strife, bitterness, an unforgiving spirit. Ah, upon how many has the sun gone down in this wrath!—their day of communion exchanged for the night of a grieved Spirit. Other and grosser forms of fleshly indulgence are specified, but *any*, even the slightest yielding to that, grieves the Holy Spirit of God.

And what a mercy it is that this is the case. How many a child of God has been brought to himself by the

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*New Version of the New Testament, by J. N. Darby, to be had of the publishers.

consciousness of having grieved the Spirit. His peace is gone, his communion has ceased, he is miserable until he judges the evil, confesses and forsakes it. Instead of going on in carelessness, only to fall deeper and deeper into sin, he is made to feel the seriousness of that which blocks the intercourse between the Spirit and himself.

It is as though a guest in our house were compelled, because of some insult, to keep to his own room and avoid intercourse with the family. He remains in the house, but he cannot enjoy the unhindered fellowship there was prior to the cause of estrangement, until all has been judged and confessed. Doubtless none of us realize how often we have grieved the Spirit by our careless ways, and correspondingly have hindered the communion we otherwise would have enjoyed; and perhaps we still less realize how much we owe to the patient faithfulness of that Holy One in showing by His grief where we have drifted.

But think, beloved brethren, of that word "grieve." Is not the grief of Christ our Lord over our sin sufficient? "The Lord hath put Him to grief" when He bore our sins. Is it possible that we should now cause pain to the blessed Spirit of God? Oh, how it should make us *hate* and abhor all forms of sin!

I do not dwell here upon the full provision of our blessed Advocate with the Father, and of the feet-washing —removing the hindrances to communion by the action of His word. Here doubtless we have the work of the Spirit in applying the word to heart and conscience. The sin is judged, confession made, and joy is restored.

There is one remark to make, however: That is a poor kind of Christian life made up of perpetual failures and restorations. How abhorrent the thought that grieving the Spirit is a necessity! How dreadful to hear it spoken of without regret or shame! God keep us all from spir-

itual hardness. No, dear brethren, a walk in the Spirit does not mean a grieving of the Spirit.

I do not think I can do better in this connection than to read the passage applying to this from Galatians v., verses 16 to 25: "This I say, then, walk in the Spirit and ye *shall not* fulfil the lusts of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot (rather, may not) do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit."

We all know that since the fall the ground produces thorns and briars, and many are the expedients that have been resorted to to get rid of them. Experience has taught the farmer that there is but one way to do this. He may plow and harrow, but for every root he breaks two plants will grow up, and his field will become a briar patch. Let him instead sow the field with grass seed, and as the grass grows up it will drive out the briars. This is overcoming evil with good. It is also equivalent to the walk in the Spirit. Let the positive things of Christ fill the heart; let the word of Christ dwell in us richly, and we will have little room and less inclination for the lusts

of the flesh. May our gracious God lead us into the liberty and joy of these things.

I am quite aware that what I have said on the Spirit for sanctification will seem very incomplete and unsatisfactory for those who believe that there is a certain definite experience through which a saint passes into a wondrous life of enlarged liberty. Now, I have said that there is such a fact as deliverance by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. But this is not sufficient for many. They claim, with more or less objectionable statements, that something is necessary on the part of the believer, and that is usually defined as a full surrender. Let the believer make the surrender, and he will experience the blessedness of the new life. Such terms as "a baptism of the Spirit," "the second blessing," "higher life," "perfect love," "perfect sanctification," "a Spirit-filled life," have been applied to this experience, but under whatever name it is an experience, and it is made dependent upon the surrender of self, as it is called.

Now, while I do not doubt that many a child of God has received distinct and marked blessings at certain stages of his life, I believe it is a great mistake to construct a theory out of it. Many a devoted Christian has enjoyed the liberty of the Spirit under some such name as I have indicated above. But, notice: It occupies us with self instead of Christ. It may be a very lovely self, but self-occupation never helps the soul. It begets a subtle pride. There must be a fresh, daily feeding upon the manna. Again, it tends to divide God's people into classes; some have experienced the blessing and others have not. Now, while it is perfectly true that there are various stages of maturity in the Christian life, and while Scripture speaks of "fathers, young men, and children" (1 John ii.), yet it is not in this way of attainment. People do not set themselves to be fathers, etc. It is matter

of growth. Further, I am convinced that surrender is not what God calls for first, nor in this connection. You will find that where these systems call for surrender, God's word puts the *cross*.

Ah, beloved, it is not a surrendered self, but a crucified self that the Spirit of God fills and uses. The sixth of Romans comes before the twelfth. In the latter we have the surrender, but it is not to get, or to attain; it is because he has entered into what is his; he has accepted the precious and wondrous fact of his death with Christ, and of the Spirit's presence and power. A crucified man has no experience to speak of. To him Christ is all. How different—how radically different from every form of sanctification that devout minds have ever devised!

With this I close. Keep the cross before you, dear brethren. Let us ever say with the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Not surrender, but death—an accomplished death—in the person of Christ. Thus we pass dry-shod, as the type has it, out of the Egypt of bondage to sin, into the Canaan of the liberty of the Spirit. And still with the sense of all the wondrous fulness of blessing in Christ, we will say with the same dear servant of Christ we have just quoted, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I was apprehended of Christ Jesus."

"To me to live is Christ."

"SAVIOUR, we long to follow Thee.
Daily Thy cross to bear,
And count all else, whate'er it be,
Unworthy of our care.

We are not now our own, but Thine,
The purchase of Thy blood,
And made, by grace and love divine,
The sons and heirs of God.

Thy Spirit, too, the present seal
Of all the Father's love,
Dwells in our souls and does reveal,
The glorious rest above.

Thy life is now beyond the grave;
Our souls Thou hast set free;
Life, strength, and grace in Thee we have,
For we are one with Thee.

O teach us so the pow'r to know
Of risen life with Thee;
Not *we* may live while here below,
But Christ our life may be."

LECTURE IV

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHURCH:—

BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT; UNITY OF THE SPIRIT. GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT; WORSHIP BY THE SPIRIT.

"O JESUS, Lord, 'tis joy to know
Thy path is o'er of shame and woe,
For us so meekly trod:
All finished is Thy work of toil,
Thou reapest now the fruit and spoil,
Exalted by our God.

Thy holy head, once bound with thorns,
The crown of glory now adorns;
Thy seat, the Father's throne:
O Lord, e'en now we sing Thy praise,
Ours the eternal song to raise—
Worthy the Lord alone!

As Head for us Thou sittest there,
Until Thy members too shall share
In all Thou dost receive:
Thy glory and Thy royal throne
Thy boundless love has made our own,
Who in Thy name believe.

We triumph in Thy triumphs, Lord;
Thy joys our deepest joys afford,
The fruit of love divine.
While sorrowing, suff'ring, toiling here,
How does the thought our spirits cheer,
The throne of glory's Thine."

UNLIKE the subjects which have in the past two lectures occupied us—the Spirit's work in the individual—we come to-night to look at His work corporately, in the Church as a whole. I may be allowed to make one or two preliminary remarks. It is a sad fact that selfishness creeps into everything with which we have to do. Even spiritual concerns are not exempt from this.

So it is by no means an uncommon thing to find Christians taking a deep interest in the Spirit's work in them individually, and yet apparently unconcerned in His work corporately.

And yet one consideration should waken every Christian heart to the keenest interest in the line of truth now before us. It concerns Christ's glory, it occupies *His* thoughts and His heart. Could there be a stronger inducement to lay aside any want of concern we may have had in this matter, and to search the word of God with the desire and purpose to seek His truth as to His Church, and to walk in that truth? If we approach the subject in this way, without prejudice and indifference, we will find help, I am assured.

Our subject is, "The Spirit in the Church," and I desire first to put before you, as briefly as may be, such scriptures as will enable us to have a distinct conception of what the Church is. Vagueness here will mean vagueness and uncertainty all through. I will give these scriptures exclusively from one brief epistle, that to the Ephesians, thus showing how the Spirit of God has brought these truths together.

"And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (Eph. i. 22, 23), In the verses just preceding, our Lord had been set forth as quickened and raised up from the grave, and then placed at God's right hand, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named." It is Christ glorified, after redemption has been accomplished through His death, that is given as Head to the Church which is His Body. Here we have the beginning marked, for the body could not exist without a Head, and Christ was made Head of the Church when He was glorified. We will find this

confirmed when we come to the baptism of the Spirit. I merely mention it now. In answering the question, What is the Church, we turn to a glorified Christ at God's right hand and say, There is the Head. The Church is His body, the fulness, or complement of Him who in His divine being fills all things. Think of the link here: how complete, how intimate. We shall find it is so intimate that in one place at least (1 Cor. xii. 12) Christ and His Church are spoken of under one name, "So also is Christ." It reminds us of that expression in the book of Genesis, where speaking of the creation of the man and the woman, we read, God "called *them* Adam."

But if the Church is thus linked with Christ, it partakes of His life in resurrection, it is a part—reverently be it spoken—of Himself, in the sense that its place, portion and destiny as well as life, are indissolubly linked with His. "Because I live ye shall live also." We will speak more of the Body under the baptism of the Spirit, so I leave it for a time and quote another scripture.

"Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ by the gospel. . . . And to make all men see what is the fellowship (or dispensation) of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God" (Eph. iii. 4–9). Here we are expressly told that what the apostle had received was a mystery, a secret of the heart of God. Particularly we are to understand that it had never been revealed in other ages, in Old Testament times. The prophets here spoken of are not Isaiah and the rest, but the New Testament prophets; for as you

notice they are mentioned after, and not before, the apostles. Besides, the connection shows the same thing.

Now what is this wondrous secret which God had reserved till the consummation of the ages? The passage shows us clearly: "That the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of His promise by the gospel." This is the Mystery. Old Testament prophets had foretold the time when the Gentiles should receive blessing at the hands of Israel, when "from Mount Zion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." But Old Testament prophets say not a word as to what we have here—a joint-body and fellow-heirs, Jews and Gentiles absolutely united and identified and marked out for a heavenly, not an earthly inheritance.* Here then is the setting aside, for the time, of Israel, and the introduction of an entirely new thing. Let this be clearly grasped, or the Church will not be seen.

It is in beautiful accord with what we have already seen, that the chosen vessel to reveal this mystery should be the apostle Paul. The very manner of his conversion gave a suggestion of the entire character of his ministry. It was Christ in glory who appeared to him in the noontide of his enmity and persecution. Christ the glorified Head of the Church called to this bitter enemy, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou *Me*." Thus at the very moment of his awakening Paul learned two things; that Jesus was glorified, and that His people were in some marked way identified with Him. Those familiar with Paul's subsequent history, and his writings, know how

* For a full treatment of this subject, the reader is referred to a paper by the late Richard Holden, entitled, "The Mystery"; to be had of the publishers

this revelation on the road to Damascus colored his entire after life.

But how is this new thing formed? Judaism had existed from the establishment of the nation and the giving of the law. The very constitution of that nation was based upon a complete separation from the Gentiles. The Passover, the national feast celebrating redemption, was exclusive. "No stranger shall eat of it." The possession of the land, the inheritance promised, necessitated the destruction of the nations occupying it. The whole after-history of the nation is largely a record of their failure to maintain this absolute separation. Any league was absolutely forbidden by the law. All the ordinances emphasized this isolation. The Gentiles were "the uncircumcised"; to associate with them was defilement. The bitterest humiliation to Israel was subjection to a foreign power; their lasting shame was the Babylonian captivity and subsequent Gentile domination, and their brightest hopes were centered about the overthrow of the Gentile, breaking his yoke, and the establishment of the nation in its former glory, as in the days of Solomon.

Now, all this separation was not a human, but a divine, "middle wall of partition." Doubtless prejudice and hatred, never contemplated in the law, came in, for the pride of the natural heart is only too prone to cherish such things. But, apart from all this, Judaism was as distinct and separate from everything Gentile, and that by divine ordinance, as it is possible to conceive.

On the other hand, words fail to describe the state of the Gentile; ignorance of God, gross idolatry, and the grossest moral corruption formed the very fibre of his being. The first chapter of Romans paints the picture in all its blackness, but none too black for the truth. Read the Roman satirists for a description of the moral state of the mistress of the world; study Greek and other mythol-

ogies to see whither man's religion led him, and you will see that words fail to describe a state which was the common character of the Gentile world.

But the cross comes in. Jew and Gentile are alike under sin, the Jew with and the Gentile without law. Let us read another passage from Ephesians, chapter ii. 13–17: "But now in Christ Jesus ye (Gentiles) who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God *in one body* by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh."

This remarkable passage confirms what we have just been seeing. The Gentiles were afar off, without God and without hope in the world. The Jews were, in point of privilege, nigh. "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" (Deut. iv. 7.) The law of commandments contained in ordinances was the witness of the separation—the enmity—existing between Jew and Gentile. So long as they stood in the flesh they were alienated, and rightly, by this law. But the Jew could not boast, for he needed the death of Christ as much as the Gentile. Grace has reconciled both Jew and Gentile by the cross, that witness of all men's sin, and slain an enmity of sin which separated from God, as well as an enmity by nature with one another. They are reconciled, not merely to one another, but to God, by the cross; and peace is proclaimed alike to Jew, near, and Gentile, afar off.

You notice two expressions, "one new man," and "in one body." The "one new man" is doubtless the new creation in Christ, "where there is neither Jew nor Greek." "If any man be in Christ there is new creation; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17). The cross has swept away the natural man, with natural distinctions, in God's sight, and left nothing but a new creation, where "Christ is all." Further, this reconciliation is "in one body," the Church. Jew and Gentile are both in the new man, and thus the one body is formed. All else is set aside by the cross. You will see the bearing of all this a little later. But I must ask you to notice the clearness and beauty of these wondrous scriptures. Surely we can have no question as to what the Church is.

I will ask you to look at two more scriptures in Ephesians, which will, I think, complete the thought of the Church, as there presented. "And ye are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit" (Eph. ii. 20-22). The "body" suggests the link of life with the risen Lord, and the grace that has so united us. It also suggests the vehicle for the activities of divine love. The "house" is looked at, in the passage I have quoted, in two ways. It is built upon the foundation, fitly framed together and growing unto a holy temple in the Lord. It is not yet completed, but will in the glory form this habitation. But it is also spoken of as a present building and a present habitation of God through the Spirit. In this aspect of the Church we have, I think, the side of order, government, discipline — the holiness that becometh God's house. Thus the Church is not only the body of Christ.

but the habitation of God. What privilege! What responsibility!

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 25–27; also verses 28–32). Here we have the affections of Christ brought out, and the Church is looked at as His wife. First, He gave Himself for her, and at last He will present her to Himself a glorious Church. The type will then be fulfilled of Adam and Eve. The allusion to this is so evident that I merely refer to it and pass on. In heaven the Church will be displayed as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and this marks the close of the Church period. She will be complete when the Lord comes, for then she will be forever united to Him in glory.

Thus we have seen the Church as body, house and bride. What varied relationships! What a privilege to be a member of that Church! If you have taken in the truths of these passages we have been considering, you have some knowledge, at least, of what the Church is.

This should be sufficient, and one shrinks from descending from these delightful themes to answer a few of the misconceptions as to the Church. These I will consider very briefly under the question, What the Church is *not*. It is not, and we have already seen why, Israel in any way. Certain scriptures have been used to teach this, and I will refer you to one or two. With the proper

understanding, it will be seen that they are in perfect accord with all that we have had before us.

The ordinary teaching is that God's Church is one in all ages; that it began with Abraham and continues through the present dispensation and the Millennium, including every saved soul to the last. It is said that the Jewish church was in a broken and fragmentary condition when our Lord came to earth, but that he repaired and re-established it upon the firm basis of atonement. In proof of this the following scripture is cited, being itself a quotation from the prophet Amos: "After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down, and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom My name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things" (Acts xv. 16, 17).

This scripture occurs in the account of the meeting at Jerusalem regarding the effort made to compel Gentile converts to keep the law. This was rejected absolutely by the assembly. It was shown that even under the law and in the prophets God had purposes of blessing for the Gentiles. The passage quoted from Amos illustrates this. But the passage most clearly refers to the restoration of the Jewish nation under the reign of a king of the house of David. In other words, it looks forward to the Millennium, when the "Gentiles shall come to Thy light." But you find not only here, but in various places throughout the Acts, things looked at from a Jewish standpoint.

As has been frequently noticed, the Acts is not a history of the Church *as such*, but of the transition from Judaism into Christianity. God patiently waited upon and pleaded with His beloved earthly people. Then, too, when we remember that this decision was reached at

Jerusalem—it was before the destruction of the city—we will see the consistency of looking at everything from that standpoint. James is simply showing that the Gentiles have a place in the purposes of God's grace, and must not be debarred from that grace by the law. He does not quote this scripture to prove that the tabernacle of David *had* been rebuilt—unquestionably it is not yet rebuilt—but to show that Gentiles come within the blessed purposes of God's grace. In other words, the Church is not alluded to in the passage. The same largely applies to the entire book of Acts.

Considerable use is made of another passage, from Romans, chapter xi. 16–24, the olive tree and its branches. From this it is argued that the olive tree is the Church, the natural branches are Jews, and the wild ones Gentiles. But notice how such handling of God's word obscures all true understanding of Scripture. Are true members of the body of Christ broken off? and in turn is the position of others only conditional upon their faithfulness? So also all that we have been learning from Ephesians would be destroyed or annulled. But how simple it all is when we see not the Church, but the privileges of grace. The olive tree is the line of privilege throughout the world's history. This began with Abraham, was continued in his successors, who, however, were "broken off" because of their unbelief, and has now passed on to Christendom, with multitudes of Gentiles enjoying the privileges to which they had been previously strangers. All is clear. The Church is not touched, but profession and responsibility are. Unfaithful Christendom will be "broken off," and repentant Israel be again restored.

In concluding (for we must hasten to our main theme), I will put side by side two scriptures that give us the destiny respectively of Israel and of the Church. Their absolute unlikeness will surely convince any that Israel

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and the Church are as distinct in the mind and ways of God as it is possible to conceive.

For Israel: "And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all the nations shall flow unto it. And many peoples shall go and say, Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah ii. 2–4).

For the Church: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, and I will show thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God; and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. . . . And I saw no temple therein; for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city hath no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof" (Rev. xxi. 9–11, 22, 23).

Such is the destiny of the Church—heavenly glory with Christ. It is for us now to trace the wondrous organism of that Church, in particular connection with our general theme—the Holy Spirit.

We begin with the Baptism of the Spirit. You will

remember that in speaking of two characteristic features of the Spirit's work in Christianity we took baptism and indwelling. Indwelling has already occupied us; it now remains to consider baptism.

I think you will find, in taking up the teaching of Scripture upon the subject of baptism, that it nearly always, if not entirely, signifies introduction into a place. "They were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (1 Cor. x. 2); that is, they were brought out fully into relationship with Moses as their leader, and the cloud and sea marked this connection. It was in contrast with their previous servitude to Pharaoh. So with all other baptisms. John's was not, as many may think, Christian baptism at all, but the badge of discipleship for those who heard and bowed to his message. They owned their sin and their desert of death, and in token of it were buried by baptism. Thus they were marked as John's disciples (John iv. 1). They were not Christians, for they knew not Christ, but their baptism with water set forth discipleship to John, as penitents who bowed to the sentence of death. Acts xix. 1–6 shows this was not Christian baptism, for it was repeated, upon the confession of faith in Christ.

But we have water baptism in connection with Christianity. No candid and impartial person who reads intelligently the book of Acts, together with the frequent references throughout the epistles, could fail to see that water baptism has a distinct place in the Christian economy. I quote a sample text from the Acts. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added about three thousand souls" (ch. ii. 41). These were Jews. Later, at Samaria, Philippi and wherever the gospel was received, Gentile converts received water baptism also. You see, this baptism was the badge of discipleship. It marked the new position

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they occupied of avowed allegiance to our Lord. They were therefore baptized in or unto His name, unto Him.

Coming now to baptism of the Spirit, we have simply passed from the realm of profession to the sphere of reality. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. xii. 13). Here the baptism of the Spirit marks our introduction, or, I should better say, effects it, into one body, the Church of which we have been speaking. It has not put us into profession, but into the real Body.

It is the greatest mistake to think of water baptism as putting us into the Church. How could water, dear friends—mere water—put us into a divine position? How empty are the claims of ritualism here! But do not many who abhor ritualism fall into the very same error by claiming that baptism introduces into the Church? Closely connected with this is a similar expression—joining the Church. This is equally unscriptural. Do you think God has left the momentous question of membership in the Church of Christ to the voluntary choice of the young believer? Absolutely impossible.

But, it will be said, we only mean that they should unite with some one of the many branches of the Church of Christ. Pardon me, beloved brethren, where in Scripture do we find such a thought? Where is there provision for many branches of the Church, save, indeed, as each believer is an individual branch? Now, I am not playing upon words when I say that Scripture does not ask or provide for a voluntary joining the Church. Ah, no! God joins us by His Spirit: "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17). The moment one believes upon the Lord Jesus he receives the Spirit, and by that very fact is united to the Church, the

body of Christ. Thus he is joined—united—to the Lord. How unlike God it would be to leave to the new-born soul anything so momentous as membership in the Church. But it will still be pressed, that the new convert is expected to select some church—some body of Christians—and "unite with the church of his choice." This will occupy us later. I merely ask the question now, how does it happen that there are these various churches, and what about the Church of *God's* choice? Is not membership in that enough?

Baptism by the Spirit, then, is universal for all saints. It is immediate upon believing. In Acts ii. 47 we have it in connection with Jews. "And the Lord added—and this was His manner of adding, as the thirty-eighth verse of the same chapter indicates—to the Church* daily such as should be saved." Cornelius furnishes an example from the Gentiles, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that He said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts xi. 15, 16).

"Into one Body." We have already seen how this is the characteristic name of the Church. "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling" (Eph. iv. 4). Here the unity of the Body, the Church is associated on the one hand with the One Spirit who has formed it, and on the other with the one hope—the heavenly glory to which it is destined.

The entire chapter, the twelfth of first Corinthians, should be read as showing the relation of the Spirit to the Body. Next to its unity, is the diversity of its members and their mutual dependence the one upon the other.

* I retain this clause with strong support from MSS., as it evidently is the meaning, even if we read with other MSS. "added together."

Each member has its own function, and how clear it is that each individual is here contemplated. None is so insignificant as to be omitted, and each has his place in the Body according to the sovereign will of the Spirit of God. The more uncomely parts are more essential, and upon them greater care has to be bestowed. A man protects his lungs carefully, while his face is exposed to the air. Sickness in one member means sickness of the body. I do not say, if my lungs or my heart are affected, that this or that special organ is sick, but *I* am sick. So, if "one member suffer, all the members suffer with it."

The body is the vehicle, we might almost say, for the spirit. So the Church as the body of Christ is the vehicle,—may we not say?—for the activities of Christ. He uses the Church, through the indwelling Spirit, to perform His work in the world, to represent Him. "As My Father sent Me into the world so send I you into the world." It is through His members that the Lord acts in saving souls, in building up saints and nourishing and caring for His Church.

There are three ways of looking at membership in the Body; as linked with Christ, "we are members of *His* body" (Eph. v. 30); as linked with all saints, "we are members one of another" (Rom. xii. 5); as individuals, "we are members in particular" (1 Cor. xii. 27). Here we have three lines of truth: connection with Christ, with one another, and individual responsibility.

Every believer is a member of this Body, as we have already seen. There is but one Church—the body of Christ. What awful presumption then to hear persons speaking of this or that organization, even if composed of Christian people, as *the* Church. Every saint on earth is a member of *the* Church, and it is nothing but the worst kind of sinful pride to exclude a single one, in our thoughts of the Church.

Thus we see that the baptism of the Spirit means His putting us, when we have believed, into the company of all saints, uniting us to Christ, and giving us our individual place in that one Body. Do you, dear brethren, desire any other church membership?

We come next to the unity of the Spirit, closely connected with what we have been already saying of the unity of the body, but distinct from it. I quote the expression from Scripture: "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. iv. 3). It is by the Spirit that the reality of divine things is brought home to us. Without Him all the precious facts as to the Church the body of Christ, with its various members and their functions, would be meaningless and inoperative. Thus, the unity of the Body is a divine fact, but without the unity of the Spirit, it would have no power in our lives, and there would be no testimony to its truth.

There is a practical unity produced by the Holy Spirit among the people of God. This is when He is permitted to impress the truth of the one body upon us, and to lead us to act in accordance with divine principles. Thus all saints are members of the one Body; no one can question that, no one can undo it. But when we ask Are all saints keeping the unity of the Spirit? our sorrowful answer must be, How few. With most, alas! what concerns the glory of our Lord, and practical obedience in carrying out His will, has little weight. They seem never to have realized that Christ has a Church on earth, established upon principles of His truth and ordered according to His will revealed in His word. As a result they are incapable of entering into the unity of the Spirit. As in the days of the Judges, every one does that which is right in his own eyes.

Is it not a fact that ecclesiastical disobedience is lightly thought of? I mean, a disregard of the truths of God's

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word as to His Church. The conscience of the saints is shocked, and rightly so, at any moral delinquency, any lapse into fleshly ways, measured by ordinary standards. But are we equally shocked by a deliberate and persistent ignoring of the unity of the Spirit? That blessed One bears patient witness to the oneness of the Church; its heavenly, separate character; its divinely provided order; and saints of God establish churches, devise order, and choose methods according to their own devising. Is that an endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit? But let us take a scriptural example.

"God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Now I beseech you brethren by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (1 Cor. i. 9–13.)

Now here is an instance of failure to keep the unity of the Spirit. Let us look at it with some care. In the first place, in writing to the assembly at Corinth as representing the entire Church, the apostle uses unequivocal language as to its oneness. "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." That is, the Church of God is one, composed of all who are in Christ, saints by their calling—including all such in every place.

Next, he dwells, at the beginning of the passage we have quoted, upon the faithfulness of God, by whom they had been called into this holy fellowship, and who would preserve them unto the end. This is a great comfort in the midst of the abounding unfaithfulness of man—God never fails. But this only brings out into more glaring relief man's unfaithfulness. The apostle had learned, from credible source, that a sad state of contention existed among them, and that so far from keeping the unity of the Spirit, by being perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment, division threatened. So that he was compelled to entreat them, by the One Name common to all saints, that such a state be brought to an end.

He then goes into details. Corinth, and all Greek cities where philosophy had sway, was familiar with various schools of thought, each with its special leader, and his followers, who would say, "I am of this one, and I of that." Now the saints had transferred this human state of things into the Church of Christ, and were arraying themselves under certain leaders, thus forming parties and sects. Whether they made use of the honored names of Paul, Apollos, and Cephas—against their will and without their knowledge—or whether the apostle added these names by way of illustration, does not affect the point. From chap. iv. 6, it would seem that he had simply transferred the application to himself and Apollos, as examples. The real party leaders were not named—but the principle was held up for examination in the apostles themselves, "that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another."

The lesson is thus made all the clearer. No one could question the devotedness of Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. If forming schools and sects with such worthy names was wrong, then all sectarianism was wrong. When we come

then to examine sectarianism, we set aside as already evidently evil, all party-making resulting from envy, jealousy and other petty worldly causes. Such things are, alas, not uncommon, but all would condemn them at once. But many will say that it is wrong to class all sectarianism with spite and quarrels, and with this I agree.

Paul was called and peculiarly gifted of God to unfold the truths of Christianity. No one familiar with his epistles can fail to see this. Doctrines abound throughout all his writings. He was thus the great doctrinal teacher.

Apollos was a man of fervent and devout spirit. He was "an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures" (Acts xviii. 24). Instead of his bodily presence being weak and his speech contemptible, he was a most convincing preacher. Further, from what we are told of his work, he watered, that is confirmed and established, those newly converted. He was thus a most valuable man.

Cephas, or Peter, stands for church order and pastoral work. He was commissioned thrice to tend and feed the lambs and sheep of Christ's flock. To him, not exclusively, had been committed the keys of the Kingdom of heaven. He thus stands for order and administration.

Now all three of these are divine provision for the Church. It needs teaching and instruction; it needs awakening and establishing; it needs care and shepherding. We can, however, knowing the natural heart of man, understand how certain minds would be more engaged with doctrines, others with the activities of service, and still others with order and government.

But suppose the one who is much engaged with doctrine begins to despise the others; and the one who is devout and earnest speaks contemptuously of doctrine; and the follower of order becomes such a stickler for it that he can see nothing else. What will be the result? "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I

of Christ." Even Christ's holy name would be made a shibboleth.

Is not this the history, largely, of the sectarianism of the present day? As I said, I do not charge the baser motives, of envy and strife—but simply the forcing of any one side of divine truth to the exclusion of all else. Suppose a company of Christians set themselves so exclusively to the study of doctrine, that they not only neglected service and order, but actually excluded all who did not act as themselves. Would they not be a sect? And suppose they draw up a most scriptural statement of doctrine and compelled all to sign that creed; would they not be a sect? What other creed do we need beside the word of God? Is it not gross dishonor to the word of God to prepare a substitute for it, intimating that its statements are not sufficiently clear cut, or definite?

In like manner could not an evangelistic revival be made the basis of a sectarian movement? Everything that would not bend to the methods of work, or that sought to turn saints to the study of Scripture as well as to seeking for souls, would be resented and stigmatized as "not according to us," and therefore a division must result. So also church order might be unduly pressed to the exclusion of all else. Thus the good that God has given, might result — shall I not say has?—in the abuses we see about us, the multitudinous divisions of Christendom.

Do I speak of what is unknown to you? Are not your own hearts burdened with what is our common sorrow and shame? What Christian will seek to defend sectarianism? I am simply, beloved brethren, speaking of what we all deplore. I call it by its scriptural name—a failure to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

As to remedies, I know of but one—obedience to the word of God. Beloved and honored saints have sought,

and are seeking, to devise a basis of union upon which all saints may come together. Any would agree to a union on the basis of their own creed or church party; some have suggested a temporary union, a sort of yearly laying aside differences and meeting on the broad basis of evangelical Christianity. But why once a year? if right, why not permanently? Church unions, undenominational societies,—these simply accentuate the sad fact; Christians *are* divided, else there would be no need to talk of uniting. Let us rather, beloved brethren, cut at the root of it all, by forsaking what is not according to the word of God, and in this endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit, we will find God is ever as good as His word. Our Lord's wish that we might be one, will be realized, and the world will be constrained to own the truth.

You will bear me witness that I speak in love and in no spirit of criticism. These things are too sad to find fault about, and who of us is blameless? It is rather for us to pray one for another, that this precious unity of the Spirit may be understood and kept.

Need I say there is no thought either of the salvation or of the personal devotedness of beloved saints who have ignored this truth? Far, far be such a thought. As a matter of fact the vast bulk of the Church is involved, and salvation rests, thank God, upon the solid Rock, Christ Himself. Multitudes by their devotedness and piety would put to shame others more intelligent, and yet with all their piety and devotedness they seem to take no interest in this most important subject. Why, oh why is this? We have failed to realize the unity of the Spirit—hence these carnal divisions.

But we leave this part of our subject, simply entreating you if you have heretofore neglected it, to take it up with the prayerful desire to know and do God's will in this as

in all else. What glory to the Lord and what happiness to your own hearts would result, even if it were a cross.

We come now to the gifts of the Spirit, which opens up another most instructive and important subject, demanding our careful attention. "Now there are diversities of gifts but the same Spirit . . . for to one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge, by the same Spirit; to another faith, by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing, by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues: but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will" (1 Cor. xii. 4–11). The remainder of the chapter, particularly the last few verses, is also helpful here; while we have a similar enumeration in Eph. iv. 8–16. There, the gifts are those of the Lord from on high, "He ascended on high and gave gifts unto men"; here, they are bestowed and operated through the Spirit, the Lord's executive upon earth.

There is also this difference, that in Ephesians the enumeration of gifts includes what we may call the ordinary work of gathering in and building up souls, while in Corinthians we have the miraculous element as well. This is in keeping with the operations of the Spirit, who is sovereign and works as and where He sees the necessity. On the other hand the Lord has bestowed the gifts which are of permanent value for the edification of the Church.

In this same epistle (chapter xiv.) we are told that the gift of tongues is not for ordinary use, but as a special sign. The same is true, I doubt not, with the other supernatural gifts, of miracles and healing. They are the sign-gifts for the special authentication of the messenger. I do not dwell, therefore, at length upon these sign-

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gifts, not only for the reason already stated, as to their being more particularly connected with the founding of Christianity, but because they, as distinct signs of divine approval, would ill accord with the present state of division in the Church. God cannot authenticate what is contrary to His will; and while I do not doubt He meets faith in the individual, and even heals the sick in answer to the prayer of faith, I do not judge that Scripture warrants us to look for these special manifestations in a day of ruin and declension like this.

And who of us would desire it? Do you covet, beloved brethren, a gift of tongues, or of working miracles? Do you not rather long for a fuller knowledge of the truth of God and greater wisdom and power in declaring it? God's truth abides, and the upbuilding of souls on their most holy faith and the care for Christ's beloved sheep is of more permanent value than the most marvelous sign-gifts, good and needful as those are in their place.

The gifts of the Spirit, then, which more directly concern us are those enumerated in Ephesians: "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting the saints to the work of the ministry, for the edifying the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 11, 12). Here again the apostles and prophets have done their work in laying the foundation (Eph. ii. 20). We have, too, their inspired writings with us. This leaves the normal gifts of the Spirit for ministry classified under the general heads of evangelists, pastors and teachers. The evangelist gathers in souls from the world by the preaching of the gospel; the pastor looks after the lambs and sheep of Christ's flock, and the teacher unfolds the word of God for their instruction.

There is also what I may dwell upon more fully at

another time—the ordinary gift of prophesy—the gift of speaking a word in due season, answering to exhortation. Indeed, the gifts are enumerated in even a less formal way in Rom. xii. 6–8, where the different gifts of teaching, exhorting, ruling, giving and others are distinguished in a beautifully simple manner.

These, then, are the activities produced in the various members of the Body of Christ by the Holy Spirit, dividing to each severally as He will. All have different gifts —different endowments of the Spirit. Another lovely passage occurs in the fourth of Ephesians, where we have each joint and band of the body serving as a link to carry blessing and edification from Christ, the Head, thus making increase of the *Body* unto the edification of itself in love.

You may not be gifted as a public speaker—comparatively few are—nor would a multiplicity of public speakers be for the profit of the Church. But that is only one channel of service. Who can enumerate the countless varieties of Christian activity? We serve unconsciously when we are holding the Head. Recurring to a former quotation, you may have noticed a slight variation from the ordinary version, "for the perfecting of the saints *to* the work of the ministry." So Eph. iv. 12 should be rendered in accordance with the change of preposition. The general gifts of a more public character are for the purpose of perfecting or preparing saints for their work. Thus the evangelist, when used of God in the salvation of a soul, has by that very act prepared another channel of gospel testimony; the pastor, in caring for a sheep of Christ is preparing that one in his turn to exercise care; the teacher who unfolds God's word is putting the key into other hands, who will pass on the precious things to still others. What a beautiful scene of activity, all actuated and controlled by the blessed Spirit of God,

and love, the very bond of perfectness, knitting saint to saint.

I desire to connect with this a passage from 1 Peter which shows the authority for all ministry. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. iv. 10, 11). Now, here the possession of the gift is the authority for its use. To have the gift is to be a steward with the responsibility for its faithful use. You know what was said to the man who hid the talent in a napkin. Possession entitles—nay, *commands*—me to use what has been committed to me. This applies not only to the ordinary ministry of the Word, as oracles of God speaking with conviction, but of all kinds of service. As with Paul, every one of us can say "Woe unto me!" if I fulfil not the service entrusted to me.

When we remember who has endowed us, who dwells in us and in the Church—the blessed Spirit of God—we see the reason for this. He, the sovereign Administrator, is present, in full charge, endowing, sending forth and sustaining His instruments for service. What more do we need?

Let us now place alongside of this the ordinarily accepted theory of ministerial ordination. I begin by the full admission that the apostles and their representatives ordained elders. Acts gives us several instances of this ordination, and Titus i. 3 and the third chapter of 1 Timothy furnish instruction as to it. But let me state that I do not know of a single passage where ministry of the Word was attended by ordination. Nowhere do we find an evangelist, a pastor or a teacher ordained

as such. This is most clear and most important, for the modern idea is that these are the very men to be ordained.

Ordination applied only to rule. It was an apostolic act conferring, by divine direction, special authority of oversight and rule upon elder men in the various assemblies. This was connected, let it be always remembered, with the prerogative of an apostle. In one sense they are right who claim no true ordination without apostolic succession. The difficulty is, who and where are the successors of the apostles? Rome claims lineal descent from Peter, and insists that all that was committed to him is now hers to administer through the pope. I do not enter into the blasphemy of their claim for the pope. Peter himself was never the "vicar of Christ." The Holy Ghost is the only vicar of Christ, and it comes perilously near blasphemy against Him for any one to arrogate to himself such a title.

But Rome is consistent in so far as she claims that apostolic authority alone can ordain. And, as a matter of fact, every one who pleads for ordination unconsciously makes the same claim. For what is ordination but derived authority? One man receives his authority from his predecessor, he in turn from the one who preceded him, and so on back to—where? Most certainly the only established succession is through Rome. Do you covet the authorization of the woman upon the scarlet-colored beast?

It matters not whether this succession comes through individual bishops or through presbyteries, the principle remains the same. Ordination and succession are indissolubly linked. More than this, man's ordination is a flagrant denial of the precious fact we are considering. The Holy Spirit, a living divine person, dwells in and presides over the Church of Christ. He especially

inspired apostles for the work of establishing assemblies. Who now is going to claim apostolic authority?

Oh, when we think of His sovereign will, His mighty power exercised in selecting, calling, equipping, sending forth and sustaining a servant of Christ in His ministry, and then think of man putting *his* approval upon this by ordination! Is it not solemn? The moment you put man, no matter how able and gifted, between the Spirit of God and the Church, you deny the great fact of Christianity—the presence of the Spirit in the Church. The greater always approves what is done by the lesser, but this would be to make man approve what the Spirit does.

But let me be careful to say that I am not here raising the question of personal piety and devotedness in those who exercise the prerogatives of ordination. Without doubt there are many consecrated men who firmly believe they are carrying out the will of God in perpetuating this system—men who could well command our respect and admiration for their zeal and piety. This is not a personal matter; it is far higher than that. Is the blessed Spirit of God to be ignored and set aside under the plea that many godly men have failed to see the truth?

I know, too, that the plea of "regularity" and "order" will be raised; but, again, is God the author of confusion? Can the Spirit not be trusted to maintain the dignity of God's house, in which He dwells? Ah! beloved brethren, unbelief lies at the root of most of this human arrangement. David's new cart and Uzzah's restraining hand were well-meant devices to secure the orderly procession of the ark to its place, but they did not secure what they were intended for. Let us trust more implicitly—let us prove our gracious God—and we will ever find the presence of His Spirit a blessed reality.

But I take up the last phase of what we shall speak of at this time—the Spirit in connection with the worship of

the Church. Of individual worship I do not now speak, though it is closely connected with corporate worship. The Spirit of adoption, of prayer, of joy, is surely the Spirit of praise, whether in the individual or in the company of saints. There are five features of worship to which I wish briefly to call your attention—the place of worship, the power for worship, the manner of worship, the material for worship, and the time for worship. Let it be remembered that special reference is not to the individual, but to the Church.

"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest, by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He has consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Heb. x. 19–22). The epistle to the Hebrews is, as you know, chiefly devoted to bringing out the contrast between the Jewish and Christian economies. Under the law there was a class priesthood and a worldly sanctuary. We have just seen that a special class of men with special prerogatives is unthought of in Christianity; so also is the thought of a special sanctuary. Now Christ is the substitute for the Aaronic priesthood. What takes the place of the temple? Let the same epistle answer. "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. ix. 24). In the passage previously quoted it is declared that we have boldness to enter into the holiest, that is, into heaven.

But we are upon earth; how can we enter into the holiest? It is by the power of the Spirit of God, who has come down and makes real for faith all that Christ has secured for us. But what a priceless boon is this! Boldness to enter into a place of worship whither Christ

has gone for us—to enter into the presence of God by the Holy Spirit! Yes, such is the happy privilege of every saint.

Now, let us put this fact alongside the thought of the vast majority of the Lord's beloved people. I dismiss the superstition of Rome and its imitators in ritualism who profess to believe that God indeed dwells in their buildings made with hands, and who, in wretched consistency, have their altars and perpetual fires—yea, and sacrifices. I say we dismiss all that as unworthy the consideration of a sober-minded Christian. But what is the ordinary thought about the place of worship? Is it not in some sense the house of God? Is it not consecrated, and is it not more or less sacrilege to use it for any other purpose? I say not a word about neatness and comfort, but if there is not something peculiarly sacred in the building, why this resemblance to Rome in the architecture? Why this constant reference to the place of worship? Is it in accord with the divine fact that our place of worship is by the Spirit of God in the very sanctuary? Do we need anything to accentuate that fact, and, if so, is it to be adornment and reminders of an earthly sanctuary?

Does all this sound forced? Ah! brethren, what is the tendency of all this church architecture? Does it make us more heavenly? Does it suit our pilgrim profession? Does it impress the world that we go to the holiest for worship? The beauties that attract us are seen by the eye of faith alone, and they are the glories of a sanctuary which no human hand has built. Let nothing mar our thought of that. Let the places where we assemble for worship be simple and unpretentious and which can in no way convey the impression that there is such a thing as an earthly sanctuary.

What is the power for worship? "We are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God" (Phil. iii. 3, R.

V.). "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John iv. 24). You remember that our Lord in this memorable conversation with the poor, sinful Samaritan woman set aside both "this mountain" (Gerizim) and Jerusalem as places of worship. In their place he put nothing of earth; only spirit and truth was to mark all worship—it was to be according to the nature of God. This connects, therefore, with what we have already said as to the place of worship.

Now, the Spirit not only introduces us into the heavenly sanctuary by faith, but He is Himself the power for all worship. We worship by the Spirit of God. In Judaism, under the law, there was an elaborate ritual, with minutely prescribed forms. All this has been set aside. The one sacrifice of Christ has forever displaced the many offerings of the law, and in place of incense, priestly robes, timbrels, harps, and all manner of instruments, we have the Holy Spirit as the power for all our worship, which is in spirit—not form—and truth.

Need I enumerate how much this displaces? If we say everything of the flesh, it will surely not be too strong. Does not every Christian feel sad at the thought of unsaved, worldly persons, who spend the week in singing at places of worldly amusement, coming and for hire leading the praises of saints? Can Pharaoh or his hosts assist Israel in celebrating a deliverance to which *they* must be strangers? But, along with such glaring abuse, much else will fail to stand the test of divine truth. I do not specify—God forbid that I should hold up these things which are our common sorrow. Fain would I weep over all this ignoring of the blessed One who is patiently waiting to lead on our praises without help from the flesh. Your own conscience can make further application. Let us pray for one another, that we may know more of this worship by the Spirit of God.

As to the manner of worship, time forbids scarcely more than the quotation of a single verse, which, however, is quite clear enough: "How is it, then, brethren? When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. xiv. 26). The entire chapter is devoted to the spiritual manifestations and operations in the assembly. Incidentally, as we might say, the subject of worship and the manner of it is brought in. No mention is made of one presiding. Everything is left free for the Spirit of God to use whom He will. If there is no provision for ordaining a special class of men for ministry, still less is there for worship. We are all priests—a holy and a royal priesthood. For one or several persons to preside at the worship of an assembly of saints is to lose sight of the ever sufficient presence of the blessed Spirit. We need not fear confusion. If faith and obedience are tested, that is always well; and who that has tasted the sweetness of simply letting the Spirit lead our praises through whomsoever He will, would return to the constraint of using but one man, no matter how gifted and devoted, under the plea of order? Do not all Christians feel the need of liberty for the Spirit, and are not meetings "thrown open" just because of this felt need? Why should any meeting of an assembly of saints be "closed"? I say nothing of a meeting which an individual teacher or evangelist may call on his own responsibility; at that, of course, he must preside to give out his message. But when the assembly meets, none but the Spirit of God should be free to use whomsoever He may please. He gathers the saints, not to worship under human leadership, but to offer their own worship in the holiest.

I do not exactly like the expression "material for worship," and yet it will not be misunderstood. Under the

law, the material for worship was the sacrifice. Now the sacrifice has been once offered, and all that we can render is the fruit of our lips, confessing the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I quote a Scripture which I believe to be the guide here, furnishing us with the center around which worship clings, and from which it radiates: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread (or loaf) and one body, for we are all partakers of that one loaf" (1 Cor. x. 16, 17). Just as all Israel's feasts of joy centered around the sacrifice, so do all ours around the memorial of our Lord's one finished sacrifice. The Lord's Supper is not the "means of grace" we would selfishly make of it, though most blessedly does it ripen and mature the Christian character when rightly entered into; nor is it in any sense the sacrifice ritualism would make of it. But it is the only feast of Christianity. We have set before us the emblems of our Lord's death, and as we recall that death we have Him before us—His person, His love, His grace—all the infinite fulness of Himself. As we thus dwell upon Him, led of the Spirit of God, praise finds its impulse and ascends as a sweet savor of Christ unto God.

Thus the Lord's Supper furnishes, if we may so speak, the material for worship. I do not limit that worship, but do claim, according to Scripture, that it should have the commanding place. Is it not unscriptural to relegate it to a secondary place, after the morning sermon? Does not this grieve the Holy Spirit, who would ever make Christ first?

One word must suffice as to the time of worship. Here again I speak only of what is characteristic. "And upon the first day of the week, when they came together to break bread" (Acts xx. 7). Here was an apostle, yet

they came together, not primarily to hear him, but to break bread. It was on the first day of the week, their usual time for thus remembering the Lord. It is no inference, but a simple statement that they met on the first day of the week to break bread. In other words, the weekly worship of the saints of God clusters around the Lord's table. Here is no room for superstition. Its frequency (every week) does not—cannot—make it common, for where the Spirit of God leads there must be perennial freshness. Thus He would make Christ chief, and on the day that recalls His resurrection would lead out our hearts in happiest praise. Ah, brethren, do not think it is in a spirit of pride or consciousness that I speak thus. But oh! that the Lord's precious people entered into these things more fully! What joy, what power—above all, what honor to Him would result!

I have now gone over our assigned subject in its various departments. How fragmentary and incomplete it is, I well know. But I commend to your prayerful study this entire subject of the Spirit in the Church. We are fellow Christians, members of one Body, indwelt by one Spirit; we are taught of God to love one another and to mind the same things. Let a common purpose animate us. Let us more than ever before seek the Lord's mind as to these things. Surely He would lead us and bless us. May it be so indeed!

"THE holiest we enter
In perfect peace with God,
Through whom we found our centre
In Jesus and His blood:

Though great may be our dullness
In thought and word and deed,
We glory in the fulness
Of Him that meets our need.

Much incense is ascending
Before th' eternal throne;
God graciously is bending
To hear each feeble groan;
To all our prayers and praises
Christ adds His sweet perfume,
And Love the censer raises,
These odors to consume.

O God, we come with singing,
Because Thy great High-Priest
Our names to Thee is bringing,
Nor e'er forgets the least:
For us He wears the mitre,
Where "Holiness" shines bright
For us His robes are whiter
Than heaven's unsullied light."

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LECTURE V

THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR POWER:—

FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT; CONFESSION; BOLDNESS; GUIDANCE; MINISTRY.

"LOVE divine, all praise excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down!
Bless us with Thy rich indwelling,
All Thy faithful mercies crown!
Saviour, Thee we'd still be blessing,
Serve Thee here, as soon above,
Praise Thee, Saviour, without ceasing,
Glory in Thy dying love.

First-fruits of Thy new creation—
Faithful, holy, may we be,
Joyful in Thy full salvation,
More and more conformed to Thee!
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Then to worship and adore Thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise!"

THE subject which occupied us two evenings ago was the Spirit in sanctification, and on the last evening it was the Spirit in the Church. In these we considered the Spirit's work in the individual and in the entire body of believers respectively. We were more particularly engaged with what was subjective in both. To-night we take an outward look; it is the outflow of divine life that is before us, and whether in individual or Church it is of the greatest importance. What are we —what is all knowledge without power?

In all probability, the first conception man has of God is that He is a Being of power. Even the heathen, though

they early lost sight of His holiness and truth retained, and in a sense do still, the sense of His power. When God revealed Himself to Abraham it was as "El Shaddai" God Almighty—even before the meaning of His Covenant name, Jehovah, was made known (Ex. vi. 3). Thus power was one of the first attributes of God revealed, and with every fresh revelation of Himself, there will be a fresh manifestation of His power. God's power reaches out, as it were, and lays hold of man.

We will, as has been our custom throughout, present little else but the Scriptures upon this subject, simply linking them together with a few words of explanation. For what can speak more clearly than the pure word of God itself? We will first speak of the Spirit for power, then for guidance, and lastly a little as to ministry.

There are four general heads under which I will collect the Scriptures as to power: The promise of power in the gift of the Spirit; filling with the Spirit for power; the manner of His working; and the conditions upon which we are to have this fulness.

First, as to the promise of power. "And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49). Similarly, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts i. 8). In these two passages we have the distinct promise of our Lord, after His resurrection, that the disciples should receive the Spirit, promise of the Father, and should thus be endued with power from on high, which would enable them to be witnesses, bearers of the gospel, first in Jerusalem and then in ever widening circles until they reached the uttermost ends of the earth. They were to tarry at Jerusalem until they received this

power. And we know they did this, continuing in expectant prayer from the time of our Lord's ascension until the day of Pentecost; and the power came in connection with the promised gift of the Spirit.

Perhaps I had better here speak of this tarrying. Many earnest seekers for power have taken it as the example for us now, and have practised and taught that we should tarry, waiting on God for a distinct enduement from on high. With many this is even confounded with the baptism of the Spirit, sealing and all the rest; while some who are clear enough as to there being but one baptism for the believer, so soon as he accepts Christ, still think that there is a special outpouring of power for the waiting, praying saint. Far be it from me, dear brethren, to cast a slight upon faith and prayer. God forbid. And without question God does answer the sincere prayers of His people, even when not intelligently offered. But our object is to get clear and scriptural conceptions of the truth, which will surely *help* and not hinder faith and prayer.

Are we warranted then by this scripture in expecting a definite and well-known enduement in answer to distinct waiting and prayer for it? The answer seems most clear and simple. What were they waiting for? not power primarily, but the descent of the Holy Spirit, and *with Him* came power and all else. Now we have seen abundantly that the Spirit has come from heaven once for all; that He comes to every believer, once for all, sealing, baptizing, indwelling. What then are we to tarry for and pray for? not surely for that Spirit whom we already have. Prayer and waiting always have their place, but not in connection with the gift of the Spirit, nor can this passage be used in the way mentioned.

But to return to our main theme. The power was promised by our Lord, and they were to wait for it. I

quote a few scriptures to show how fully He fulfilled His promise—merely indicating the presence of the power. "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" (Acts iii. 12). "And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this?" (Acts iv. 7). Peter and John had found a poor crippled beggar—lame from birth—laid at the beautiful gate of the temple. What a striking picture of the helplessness of the law to deliver man. Here under the very shadow of the temple, with all its gorgeous adornment and splendid ritual, lay a man helpless from birth. He begs; how can he give that which the law demands?

But power comes to him through these two men. He is delivered from his helplessness, and walking, leaping, and praising God, in the ecstasy of a newly found blessing, he enters into the place of worship. Surely a power had been put forth, and all the people had to acknowledge it. Even the priests were compelled to recognize the fact, and ask "by what power," and, as though fearing to speak the Name—"by what name have ye done this?" Here, then, is the promised power shown in the miracle, but that was only a type of delivering power from sin and all else. Nor was this confined to a few. All might not work miracles, but all had divine power for the work for which they were used.

I mention but one other verse in this connection, merely dwelling now upon the fact that power was characteristic of the new work, by the Spirit. "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. . . . And they (the opposing Jews) were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake" (Acts vi. 8. 10). Here both in extraordinary work, and in the usual testimony of the truth we see the power

vouchsafed. May we not truly say that power was the mark of all that time?

Of Stephen it was said that he was full of faith and power; it is also said that he was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost (Acts vi. 5), and thus we can take up the subject of filling with the Spirit for power. This is an expression of frequent use in connection with the Holy Spirit, and it will be of much interest to trace it through some of the New Testament Scriptures. There are three or more effects of this filling: we have filling for service, filling for joy, and filling for testimony. I do not mean that these are mutually exclusive, on the contrary they are closely linked together, but each of these features is prominent in certain scriptures.

"For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" (Luke i. 15). This is said of John the Baptist. Now we know he was not in the Church, but the forerunner of our Lord. He was not sealed with the Spirit nor baptized by the Spirit, but he was filled with the Spirit. Filling has to do with power and service, and John was endowed for his service from earliest childhood.

"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness" (Luke iv. 1). It is not ordinarily remembered that our blessed Lord was filled with the Spirit for service—in some sense as His people have to be. It becomes us to tread with unshod feet when we come near the person of our holy Lord; but if we speak reverently, we will be helped by a clearer understanding of His perfections. "The Word was God." Our blessed Saviour was eternally divine, the Son of God, equal with the Father in glory, power and being. He was, and is "God over all blessed forever." Then He was also Man. "The Word became

flesh." He was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. Thus His human nature was due to the direct act of the Holy Spirit. In type this is seen in the meat-offering, where the fine flour was mingled with oil. (See Lev. ii. 4, etc.) But when the meat-offering was baked, prepared for man's use, it was also anointed with oil. This typifies His anointing by the Spirit and preparation for His public ministry.

In the thirty years of retirement at Nazareth, our Lord was the perfect One, truly and absolutely the Father's delight; but when He came forth to serve, the Spirit was sent, not only as the seal of approval upon Him for what He had been during His retirement, but to empower Him for His special ministry. Our blessed Lord's life we must remember, was one of perfect dependence; He did not use His divine prerogatives directly, but did all by the Spirit of God who filled Him. Thus we read, "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good" (Acts x. 38). Thus our blessed Lord was filled with the Spirit for service.

Of Stephen we have already spoken. He was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost (Acts vi. 3, 8). But I want you to notice the service for which Stephen was thus fitted by the filling of the Spirit. The poor of the flock needed to be fed, not alone with the bread of life, but with bodily food as well. Now it is freely conceded that all spiritual service must be rendered through the Spirit's power. And in the churches, the spiritual office-bearers are selected for their piety and general devotedness. But when it comes to what are termed temporal affairs, the same care is not taken. In these things any person of good moral character, though he may not be a professing Christian, is encouraged to take part. If he has good business capacity, that is the main qualification.

First of all, let us remember that God never accepts

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the services of an unsaved man. Until he bows to the grace and love of God and accepts the free gift of salvation, he cannot render any service in any connection. There is no such thing as "temporal affairs" in the Church of Christ. All things are sacred. What an object lesson! A man must be filled with the Spirit rightly to minister to the necessities of the saints. Let us remember this.

At the close of his brief career, we are again told that Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost. It was after his fearless arraignment of the Jews, and their conviction of resisting the Holy Ghost, that we read, "But he being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 55). The Spirit opened his eyes to heavenly glories, and while the stones were crushing the life out of his body he beholds Jesus in the glory and soon departs to be with Him. But I have referred to this as linking together, by this one term, the lowliest service and the highest glories. He was filled with the Spirit for attending upon the widows; he was full of the Holy Ghost as he gazed upon Jesus in glory. Well do we know it was all one in the eyes of our blessed Master who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of them, ye have done it unto Me."

In the same way we have Barnabas spoken of: "He was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost, and much people was added unto the Lord" (Acts xi. 24). This is the result of the ministry of a man full of the Spirit. Power is exhibited in results, and one may be coldly accurate without a particle of spiritual strength, and no blessing resulting from constant labor. The reason is evident: for believers to be added to the Lord, the servant must, in some measure at least, be full of the Spirit. Thus we have three instances of the fulness of the Spirit

for service, and our blessed Lord's which I had rather speak of singly, though He humbled Himself to take the servant's place, and like His servants, engaged in His Father's work in the power of the Spirit of God.

We have next several scriptures where being filled with the Spirit is connected with joy and praise. "And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: and she spake out with a loud voice and said, Blessed art thou among women" (Luke i. 41). Similarly, at the close of the chapter we read, "And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel" (Luke i. 67). Here again we have as you notice, filling with the Spirit before Pentecost, showing how distinct it is from sealing and baptism. In the cases of Elizabeth and Zacharias it was evidently similar to prophesy; indeed it is said of Zacharias that he prophesied. It was a special visitation of the Spirit, endowing them for the time with the faculty of expressing their joy and praise in inspired language. This emphasizes what we have already seen as to the filling. There was something special which gave occasion to it, as appears from nearly all the scriptures we shall examine.

In a few cases we have the word "full" of the Spirit, but in most it is "filled." The difference seems to be this: "full of the Spirit" indicates the habitual state of soul—one constantly controlled by the Spirit, as our blessed Lord, and in their measure Stephen and Barnabas. "Filled with the Spirit" is very frequently, as I have already said, for some special service, prophesy, or testimony. I do not think that the opposite to "filled" is necessarily "empty." For instance, as we shall see presently, the apostles were filled again and again. It would not be a fair inference to think that in the interval they were in a lower spiritual state, but that special power was given as special emergencies arose.

Returning for a moment to Zacharias and Elizabeth, how beautiful it is to see this outburst of praise, under the impulse of the Spirit of God. It was upon the occasion of Mary's visit to her that Elizabeth breaks out in joyful strain, and it was after long silence, caused by his own unbelief, that Zacharias has his mouth opened to set to his seal that God is true. But all centers about Christ. He is the centre of all true joy, the object of the highest praise.

Passing now to the book of Acts, so full of illustrations of our subject, we read, "And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost" (Acts xiii. 52). The connection here is of much interest. They had, after faithfully preaching the gospel at Antioch, been expelled from the city. This is what the servant of Christ may expect, according to his Master's word. But what was the effect of this persecution upon the minds of these devoted servants? Were they depressed and discouraged? Did they meditate giving up and returning to their homes? Ah no! they were filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost. Thus the night only causes the pillar of fire to gleam out brightly. "We glory in tribulations also."

The word used here for "filled" is different from the one usually so translated, though a similar root. It occurs here and in the next scripture I shall quote, and in both cases I think you will notice a shade of different meaning from the ordinary word. That, as we saw, seems to be for special emergencies; this would not exactly be that here. The joy was to be, surely, a constant thing, though specially manifested as occasion required. It is the usual word for "filled with wisdom" and similar expressions, describing a habitual state, but capable of particular application.

We see the same in the following scripture: "Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess; but be filled with the

Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (Eph. v. 18, 19). Without question we have here a warning against actual drunkenness; but I am sure you will agree with me that far more than that is suggested. Wine is that which exhilarates the natural man. It is a stimulant. It is also a type of joy. Here then we are warned against *mere* earthly joy, anything that merely exhilarates the natural man.

We have it in type in the history of Nadab and Abihu (Lev. x.), the priests who offered strange fire to the Lord, and who fell under the penalty of God's anger. You will observe in that chapter, in immediate connection with the sin of the priests, that God prohibits any priest from using wine or strong drink when engaged in worship. The inference has been drawn, not without great probability, that these priests were under the influence of wine and thus offered strange fire.

Applying it to ourselves, how often is there the mere exhilaration of nature in the professed worship of God. How often is feeling, excitement, fleshly energy, made to take the place of the Holy Spirit. It seems that this is the very connection of the passage. They were to sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord. Filled with the Spirit there would be neither room nor need for the empty frivolities of nature; the joy of the Lord would eclipse it all.

And this brings me to say a few words as to praise, which will serve as a connecting link with the next branch of our subject. When our blessed Lord, by His Spirit, was expressing the sorrows of the cross in the twenty-second psalm, He answers His own question—"Why hast Thou forsaken me?"—in the words, "Thou art holy, O Thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel" (Ps. xxii. 3). It was because of the holiness of God, who cannot endure

sin, that He was compelled to forsake the spotless sin-bearer. But another thought is added, God inhabits, or dwells amid, the praises of His people. He must be known in such a way that His very presence produces praise. Most beautifully does this accord with the former fact. Our Lord was forsaken, in order that redemption might be accomplished, and as a result praise issue forth from hearts forever delivered by grace. God must have a willing and a joyful people, and it is only as this is the case that there can be power.

So we read, "Judah is My lawgiver" (Ps cviii. 8). Judah means praise. It was the leading tribe of Israel, occupying the forefront in the march through the wilderness (Num. x. 14), and taking the lead in the conflicts in Canaan (Judges i. 1, 2). The kingship belonged to this tribe—in the family of David—and Jerusalem, the city of the great King, was upon its border. But the significance of the name suggests what we have been seeing already. "Judah is My lawgiver." Praise, flowing from a satisfied heart, occupied with the glories of God — this is His sceptre! What a rule, where not compulsion, but joy has sway, and the only constraint is that of love.

Thus to be filled with joy and praise by the Spirit is the only way of securing a bold and faithful testimony for Christ. The singers are to be in the forefront of the battle. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and it abides. When the emergency arises, the strength is there, and the victory is assured.

This brings us to dwell for a little upon a third feature or object of being filled with the Spirit—to give boldness for confession and testimony. We will read Acts ii. 4; "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." The promised time had come and the Spirit had been poured out. His presence was visible

and audible, though more yet, it was personal and abiding. It is noticeable and significant that the form in which the Spirit appeared in coming upon the disciples and upon our Lord was entirely different. Upon Him He came as a dove; upon the disciples, as a tongue of fire, upon each one. The reason is simple and beautiful.

The dove in Scripture is the bird of sacrifice. In the burnt-offering more particularly it was used. Further it was the bird of love, and of sorrow. Our blessed Lord was taking His place publicly as the sacrifice. He was, we may say, at His baptism offering Himself to God. What more fitting than that the eternal Spirit through whom that offering was to be exhibited, should come upon Him in the form which set forth the sacrifice, the love which led Him to it, and the sorrow over the sins of men which made it necessary.

With the disciples it was different. The service to which they were called was chiefly testimony, and so, most fittingly, the Spirit of truth comes upon them as a tongue. The fire speaks of the holiness of God in judgment, and you will remember the Spirit's work in conviction included the judgment. But the beautiful part of it is that, if men bow now to the judgment of God and accept His salvation, they will be saved from judgment to come.

Thus this filling with the Spirit was directly connected with the testimony which they all began immediately to give, in the various languages of those who were assembled. As has already been remarked this manifestation of the Spirit's presence must be distinguished from the presence itself. He is always present, but He does not always manifest it—may we not say He never now does so?—in the supernatural gift of tongues. Extravagant claims have been made to this gift. But in all cases the "tongue" is some unintelligible jargon. Here, however,

the tongues were the well-known languages of the various nations represented at Jerusalem. The wonder of it was that untutored men, heretofore ignorant of the languages, should be able to declare in them "the wonderful works of God."

I do not limit His power, but for reasons already given, I do not expect—would you desire it?—to see this manifestation at the present day. But, thanks be to God, we have the living Person who has united us to a glorified Christ, and who is as ready as at Pentecost to fill us with all boldness for testimony, as for all else.

I will ask you to contrast the apostle Peter before and after the gift of the Spirit. You well know the sad details which culminated in his open denial of his Lord—the sleep in the garden, the following afar off, the sitting down in the judgment hall to warm himself at a fire kindled by Christ's enemies. Ah, dear brethren, let us beware of fires, of warmth and comfort and pleasure, created by the enemies of the Lord Jesus. How many young Christians have forgotten this, and paid most dearly for it. Peter identified himself with the world. He is now ashamed to identify himself with a rejected Master. Look at him—at yourself, too—in the priest's palace. A little girl can make him tremble; he is ashamed to confess that Holy One who was Himself making such a good confession, and at last the cock crew. Truly a strange contrast; it seemed blackest night, so far as Peter was concerned, but already it was dawn, for with that cock's crow Peter reached the end of himself.

But look at this same man fifty days later, now not with a maid to face, but the whole mass of Christ's rejectors. Without a tremor, he, the spokesman for all, stands up and lays at their doors the awful crime of Christ's death: "Ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." What made this difference? Was it merely that

Peter was restored in his soul? Ah, he was *filled* with the Spirit, and knew no fear.

Let us trace it a little further, in the fourth chapter. In reply to the question of the priests, which we have already looked at, as an admission on their part that a mighty power was at work, mark the noble boldness of Peter's reply: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him doth this man stand here before you whole" (verses 8–10).

They were compelled to own the courage of this reply: "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled." They recognized them as Galileans, companions of Jesus, but whence this power? Ah, they knew not of the presence of that Spirit who fills the faintest with a boldness none can deny.

But they are not softened. Their wretched pride would make even acknowledgment of the power of God but a fresh occasion for forbidding Peter and John to speak again in this name of Jesus. Here is simply another opportunity for the apostles' boldness to show itself: "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (verses 19, 20). Not for one moment would they give place to man when God was in question. The Holy Ghost cannot be cowed, dear brethren, and when one is speaking as led by Him, he has all the power of God on his side. What are chief priests and scribes and elders to one who has the Spirit of God with him?

But now we see another side. These same men, victors in the presence of the enemy, return to their own company. Is it with flying colors and boasts of what they had said and done? Ah, no; but they return to Gilgal. They realize that the power was not their own, and that they are as weak as ever. So they pour out their souls unitedly, imploring the help of Him who was the Almighty and who had foreseen this very raging of the people. They ask Him to behold the threatenings, and to grant unto them that "with all boldness they may speak thy Word." Quickly comes the response: "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and they spake the word of God with boldness" (verse 31). Now, this is an illustration of what we have seen as to filling with the Spirit. It is a special manifestation of His power for special cases. You would not say the disciples were in a wrong state prior to this response, or that they had lapsed from a previous good state. On the contrary, they are evidently in the enjoyment of uninterrupted communion, as shown by their lowly, dependent spirit.

You will notice also that they did not pray to be filled with the Spirit; they prayed that they might speak the word of God with all boldness. Now, this, I am sure, is of great importance, and in keeping with the entire subject. We never find the disciples waiting for an enduement of the Spirit or anything of the kind after Pentecost. They *had* the Spirit; He dwelt in them; they were full of the Spirit, so to speak, and needed but to realize the necessity constantly for the power of God. Then, as the occasion arose, the Spirit took possession of them and used them as the instruments of His mighty energy. Is there not much instruction for us here?

But we will look at a few other similar uses of filling.

"Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, fixed his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil," etc. (Acts xiii. 9). Paul had at his conversion been filled with the Spirit (Acts ix. 17). This seems to have answered to the Pentecostal filling of the others, for he straightway began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God. Here, again, we see him filled, as he meets this enemy of the truth. This Bar-Jesus was evidently a Jew, and type of the whole nation, who persistently resisted the truth of God. But Paul goes further than Peter and John, in that he not merely withstands, but pronounces judgment upon the false prophet. This judgment of blindness is a striking illustration of what has happened to the nation—blind for a season. He was filled with the Spirit as he thus withstood Satan's power, another illustration of what we have already seen. What boldness! what faith it involved! And yet the power was not his own. In the next chapter (xiv. 3) we see this boldness as marking his entire ministry at Iconium, where there was special opposition. "Long time, therefore, they abode, speaking boldly in the Lord."

A humility similar to that which we have already remarked is seen in the apostle's request for the prayers of the saints. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit . . . and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, . . . that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak" (Eph. vi. 18–20). It is beautiful, thus to see the apostle not counting upon his having been again and again filled with the Spirit for special testimony, but asking that he may with all boldness, as always, so now also magnify Christ in his body (Phil. i. 20). You notice, again, that he does not ask

them to pray that he may be filled with the Spirit, but that he may speak the Word with boldness.

Now, this brings us to see the manner of the Spirit's working, which will also furnish a reason why we are not to ask to be filled with the Spirit. I turn to a familiar passage in the gospel of John: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John vii. 38, 39). This is the last of the three passages in the gospel of John that speak of the Spirit under the simile of water. We have new birth by water in John iii. 3, 5; we have the well of water springing up unto everlasting life in John iv. 14; and here you have the rivers of water flowing out. The volume has, as it were, increased until it cannot be confined within. It must find an outlet.

Now, new birth, as we saw, is the impartation of life to the soul; the well of water speaks of that full supply of the Spirit for all our needs, and here the stream reaches to those without. How amazing the contrast with the natural man! Man is ever craving, ever hungering; he is seeking selfishly to satisfy his hunger and thirst. This was what the woman of Samaria was doing, and our Lord tells her whoever drank of human wells would thirst again; they could never fill their craving with earth's wells. Here, however, the craving has not only been met, but there is such an abundance that the outflow goes to the needy ones outside. It is a beautiful picture of the Spirit's ministry.

The first thing, I think, that strikes us is the absence of all effort; or, perhaps, to speak more correctly, the very opposite of effort. Effort would have to be put forth to check the outflow. You may rest assured that any-

thing requiring urging or goading is not the mark of the Spirit. Whenever a service or testimony is entered upon in imitation of others, or in dependence upon the arm of flesh, it is not the Spirit filling and overflowing. He never needs, if I may use such language, the assistance of man. But how much restless Martha service this cuts off at once! How much of the planning and contriving, the studying of "methods of work" and much else would slip from us as Saul's armor did from David, were this outflow unchecked!

For we must face that. We are told to "quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. v. 19), and immediately following it, "Despise not prophesyings." It is possible to hinder —to quench the Spirit. Just as in private communion we may "grieve the Spirit" by bitterness and anger, so we may quench the Spirit by despising His work, and thus putting obstacles in His way. Those very expedients of which I was just speaking, are they not, in most cases, the efforts of unbelief to go on without the Spirit, and therefore despising Him? Let us see to it that no barriers are put in His way, and soon will there be a realizing sense of the fulfilment of this precious promise of our Lord's.

But let us recur to the subject of filling in connection with this outflow. I think that the thoughts of most of us are very vague, if not mystical, as to filling. Have we not some material, physical thoughts, and do we not forget that filling, when applied to a person, is very different from the use of the word in connection with a material substance? This last may be used as an illustration, but must never go beyond the point intended to be illustrated. Thus, in the beautiful simile we have been looking at, water is the type of refreshing—of that which meets the desires—the thirst of man. So far we use the figure.

When we come to speak, however, of a Person filling us—a Person, as it were, flowing out, we must ask ourselves *how* a person fills. I am quite aware that we can easily get beyond our limits here, but a few simple thoughts may prove helpful. God fills everything; He is omnipresent. So is the Holy Spirit. Christ has ascended up that he might fill all things (Eph. iv. 10). We have no material thoughts in connection with these profound truths. By God's omnipresence we simply understand that He is Himself, in His divine completeness, everywhere present. He puts forth all his power throughout infinity constantly. So when we speak of Christ filling all things, we think simply that His glory, honor, power are to be everywhere manifest.

Thus, when we speak of being filled with the Holy Spirit, we simply mean that He has complete, entire control of our whole being. He occupies the entire man. An illustration may help here. We speak of a family filling a house, and we mean they have entire and undisputed control of it. In fact, we can speak of an individual as filling the house, when he makes his presence and influence felt everywhere. We could carry the illustration further. A person is received as a guest into our home. He is a person of beautiful character, and singularly helpful. He is received into our guest-rooms, but is tacitly excluded from the more private parts of the house, where the work is done. Such a person would be said to be dwelling in our home, but you could not say he was filling the house. He is limited to certain parts of it. Perhaps he feels he is not welcome in the very part where his help would be greatest.

But, at last, through a fuller acquaintance, a sense of confidence, a realization of help already, and, above all, an increasing sense of utter incompetence in ourselves, we admit him, gradually, perhaps, to all the house. He

makes his presence and his help felt everywhere. He fills the house.

I need scarcely apply the illustration. The Holy Spirit has taken up His abode with us forever, not only as guest, but, did we know it, as sovereign disposer, ruler and guide. And yet, with what divine tenderness—gentleness—does he dwell in us! He allows us to treat Him as a guest—yea, as we would treat no other guest. He permits us to thrust Him out of the way, perhaps; at any rate, to exclude Him from the every-day part of our lives. However, a sense of the blessedness of His presence, of His help where we have yielded up to Him, above all, His own power working through these means and making us realize our helplessness, compel us at last, step by step, perhaps, to give Him His place in all things. He fills us.

This will explain the exhortation of the apostle to which we have already alluded: "Be filled with the Spirit." We are not to "give place to the devil"; we *are* to give place to the Spirit—to let Him be ungrieved, unchecked in His complete administration of our entire life. We can see thus the constant fulness of the Spirit, and the special filling for this or that service. In one sense, we are to be always, as we have seen, full of the Spirit; in another, as occasion arises for testimony or service, we see that fulness manifested in the special filling and overflow of which we have had examples.

We are now prepared to look at our last point in connection with the Spirit for power—the conditions upon which we are to enjoy this power; and to this I ask your prayerful attention. Here, as everywhere, I simply present the word of God.

Let us see what this power is, slightly different and yet not to be severed from the Spirit's, and therefore in place here. The apostle prays that the Ephesians may know

"what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand" (Eph. i. 19, 20). Now, here is a stupendous statement. We see Christ in His tomb raised and elevated to the throne of God. Could any power be greater? And yet this same power has wrought to us-ward, not merely for our benefit in Christ, but we, too, have been quickened—raised *with* Christ—as the second chapter shows. The power that wrought in Him has wrought in us. How amazing!

Look next at the vessel in which this power is displayed. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. iv. 7). The verse preceding, in connection with this one, recalls what was doubtless in the Spirit's mind—the earthen pitchers of Gideon's men, in which the lights were concealed. They were then to break the pitcher and the light would shine out. Beloved, I want you to notice that what was necessary for the display of the excellency of the power was not an adorned pitcher, not a surrendered pitcher, not a discarded pitcher, but a *broken* pitcher. Let us see how Paul treated his earthen vessel. It was a goodly one to look at—a beautiful Hebrew vase, with delicate tracery and ornamentation upon it. "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law a Pharisee; concerning zeal persecuting the Church; touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless." Surely, a goodly and beautiful vessel to admire. What did Paul do with it? *He broke it to pieces.* "What things were gain to me those I counted loss for

Christ." But, you say, this was for salvation. Notice, however, the continuance of it: "Yea, doubtless, and I *count* all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil. iii. 4–8).

Returning to second Corinthians, we see a further illustration of the same, in the twelfth chapter. In the previous chapter he had narrated the various sufferings he had passed through in carrying out his ministry. He does this, as he says, foolishly, not to boast, but for their sakes, to show the emptiness of the false boasts of some who were seeking to subvert them. In the twelfth chapter he tells of his experiences as a man in Christ, caught up into heaven, there beholding things impossible to be uttered. Think of the privilege—the honor of being thus permitted to behold the glories that shall be! And yet, dear brethren, it was simply as a man in Christ he was introduced into these scenes. His title was that he was in Christ; and is not that our title? and by the Spirit have not the spiritual glories of our place in the heavenlies been unfolded to our minds? So that the lesson which follows is for ourselves. May we mark it well.

"Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure" (2 Cor. xii. 7). Here is a man who has seen the glories of heaven. He comes to earth, and what does he find? Not glories and honors, but the thorn in his flesh, Satan's messenger. He is to learn that the only vessel out of which such glories can shine is a broken vessel. Otherwise he would be puffed up by the revelations. And there is great danger lest the precious truths appropriate to us as men in Christ may simply feed our natural pride. Hence, in order to rightly enjoy and truly give out these truths,

there must be that which answers to the thorn in the flesh. The vessel must be broken, and it is the cross, learned in its reality, that breaks the vessel.

Let us dwell upon this. The cross is the secret of power. The cross is what we can glory in. It sets us aside, breaks us to pieces, writes upon us the sentence of death, in order that the power of Christ, through the Holy Spirit, may rest upon us. The one who has learned death, who has the sentence of death in himself, is the one who will have power. We can thus understand the Lord's word to Paul: "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness"; and his reply—may it be ours as well!—"Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

You speak of conditions upon which power will be given you. You are to make a complete surrender of your will, strength, time, talents—all that you are and have to be put upon the altar. But *who* makes this surrender, and what is the altar? If *you* make the surrender, it is self surrendering self, a most subtle form of self-righteousness. But when we see it is the cross of our Lord—that cross by which I am, I was crucified, in His death; that "I am crucified with Christ"—when we see this, I say, we find that it is not a question of surrender for me, but of the cross which has set me aside, that Christ may be all. Anything short of the cross but fosters pride, and pride in its worst form.

But we look a little further. We have seen the nature of the power—the same which wrought in Christ; we have seen the suited vessel for the display of this power—a vessel broken by the cross that the light may shine out. Now, let us see the working of that power in us practically. "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, *according to the*

power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory," etc. (Eph. iii. 20, 21). This is the doxology following the wondrous prayer of the apostle—a prayer for the very thing we are speaking of, power. He asks that they may be "strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man." He sets no limits to the fulness of blessing, except the fulness of God! Then we are assured that the power which worketh in us is all-sufficient to do exceeding abundantly above all our desire or thought. We *have* the power; we do not have to *get* it.

But let us remember ever that this power is not ours. It is the power of Christ. Further, this power is never bestowed upon us, if I may so speak, in bulk. We have not a great mass of power given to us; we have no storage batteries, to use an illustration familiar to us. We have not strength in ourselves for a single moment. More than this, I am sure we are not to expect to be conscious of power. We will be conscious of weakness, and the Spirit's power works through our weakness. We never feel as spiritual giants, ready to perform wonderful feats of strength. Ah, no! such was not Paul. His speech was not with enticing words of man's wisdom. His bodily presence was weak, and his speech contemptible; but the faith of those who heard him was established in the power of God.

God's great men are servants; God's mighty men are weak; God's noble men are base and despised—that no flesh might glory in His presence.

Such, beloved brethren, I believe to be the teaching of the word of God upon this all-important theme. It has been put briefly and meagerly, but if you are convinced that the way of power lies in just the opposite direction from that which is ordinarily supposed, I shall have hope that you will go on to learn the secret of it—"Not I, but Christ."

I add an illustration, which may simplify the subject and make it practical to the youngest saint: A train is drawn into the station by an immense engine, and comes to a stop. We are told that this engine is capable of drawing the heaviest trains at the rate of fifty miles an hour. At present it is standing quite still. We go up to it and try to push it along; we try to force the wheels to revolve; we call ten, twenty, a hundred, to our assistance, but the train stands motionless. All the men who could get their hands upon it could do no more than push it along at a snail's pace for a few feet. But now the engineer takes his place, and, with *one hand* upon the lever, he opens the throttle-valve, and the train glides lightly out of the station and flies, tireless, with the speed of the wind, along the hundred miles of its appointed journey. What a mighty hand the engineer has! Ah, no! but he has released the mighty power *in* the engine, but held back by the throttle. Steam was the power that was working in, and he removes the hindrance to its working out.

The resurrection life of Christ, in the power of the Spirit of God, is the "power that worketh in us." When that power is checked from entering into our daily life we come to a standstill—the Church of God comes to a standstill. All the power of all the saints upon earth cannot push it forward. We may resort to all sorts of expedients—"methods of work" and what not—but the snail-like progress of things shows how unavailing it all is. But now the Spirit of God, if we may use such imagery, as the engineer, applies the lever—the cross of Christ—and the throttle is removed. What is that throttle? It is *self* in all its forms; not naughty self merely, but religious self as well. The cross has brought in the sentence of death upon *me*, and when the blessed Spirit of God applies that, all His own energy and power passes

into our every-day life, and we shall speed along as on the wings of the wind—"mount up with wings as eagles, run and not be weary, walk and not faint." Was any new power obtained? No, but "the power that worketh in us" was permitted to work out as well.

You may apply the illustration to questions of detail as well, no doubt. The Spirit of God may be laying upon your conscience some specific obstruction, some self-will, disobedience, association, sin. By all means, yield to what He says. But after all, the cross is the lever, and self—all self—is the obstruction that stands in the way of a divine energy that dwells in every child of God.

Does it not make you weep to think of all this hindered power in the Church of Christ? Sad it would be if we had no power—if we had to call it down from heaven. But to be indwelt by the Spirit of God—omnipotent power—and yet to be idle and helpless! Oh, beloved brethren! Let us awake; let us make sharp knives—yea, let us know the fellowship of Christ's sufferings, that thus also we may learn the power of His resurrection. May our God awaken us, for the responsibility is ours; we must enter into these divine facts for our own souls. Soon, soon would shouts of victory and rejoicing sound throughout the army of the Lord.

To complete the subject laid out for us, it remains now to look a little at guidance. Misdirected energy is sometimes more fatal than quiescence. The swifter the train is moving, the more harm would result from its leaving the tracks. It is impossible to think of the energy of the Spirit without His guidance also. A few passages will suggest a line of research which will prove interesting and helpful.

"And as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them" (Acts xiii. 2). The occa-

sion was momentous. It was the first regular going forth from the assembly, of messengers who would carry the gospel to Gentiles, as well as Jews. There are doubtless features here which are apostolic only, and yet, in the main, it is a simple picture of the spirit of prayer, self-denial, dependence and fellowship which should mark the Church of God at all times. There may be, and, in the highest sense, are, no "prophets" who can prefix the infallible "thus saith the Lord" to their specific utterance; but we have the "thus saith the Lord" in His all-sufficient and infallible word, and we have the same sovereign Spirit, who surely can make known His will.

The one feature I wish you to notice is the sovereign direction of the Spirit. They were all waiting upon God in the exercise of their various gifts, making faithful use of the opportunities at hand, when the Spirit shows them an open door. Twice is fasting mentioned, and it must be specially significant. I do not speak of the mere abstinence from food, but of that spirit of earnest longing, of self-denial, of absorption, which lies back of the actual neglect of food. Fasting is not an end, scarcely a means to an end, but an indication of the purpose of a soul that has lost its natural inclinations in the one mastering desire. It is to such souls, emptied of self, that the Spirit makes known His will.

How little there is of that among God's saints. How little conviction of the direction of the Spirit of God. New work is undertaken, special meetings are held, various activities started, but has it been "the Holy Ghost said"? If there were more the attitude of these servants, would not the Spirit still definitely make known His will? They go forth, guided, helped, sustained by that blessed One. We have seen His energy in Paul on this very journey, and the joy filling their hearts in the privations endured.

In line with this work of direction is the other side of

the Spirit's work in guidance. We read they, "were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia," —the small province of that name on the west coast of Asia Minor, in which were situated Ephesus and other large cities. Then they attempted to pass into Bithynia, "but the Spirit suffered them not" (Acts xvi. 6, 7). Here we have the Spirit hindering. It is not providential hindrance, but a distinct prohibition clearly made known. Here again you will say, this was supernatural, and therefore not for us. While, however, we do not expect miraculous interposition, yet will not the indwelling Spirit make known His will? If there is the dependence upon God, the looking to Him for guidance, will He not give it? The reason for this hindering is soon apparent: a fresh start was to be made: the gospel was to be carried into Europe; and the next chapters give us the wonderful history of that journey from Troas to Philippi and the cities of Greece. Later on, Paul did a great work in Ephesus, now the Spirit hinders and forbids in order that they may go further.

This I think will explain how they were "forbidden." They had Asia on their mind, but were conscious of no freedom to go. There was no joy, no sense of the Spirit's guidance. So they must wait until clear, nor do they have to wait long, and the larger purpose of God is soon revealed.

Here again, we must confess little experience. We are so full of impulse, of our own thoughts and plans that there is not the quiet waiting upon God for His mind, and so we lose the sense of His approval, and the power of His Spirit. Need we wonder that little fruit attends our labors? And yet, do we not all know something of this hindering? There is a sense of constraint and uncertainty that surely should call us to further waiting on God. This is for the individual servant, and for companies of

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saints as well. Often doubtless, the Spirit would hinder us from a special line of service to turn us to another; or in order to exercise the hearts of others, that the fellowship of all might be heartier, and the blessing correspondingly larger. "Wait on the Lord." The subject is full of interest and profit, and needs our constant and prayerful attention.

I quote a familiar passage to show that this guidance is not for the few merely, but the common privilege of every child of God, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14). Here the badge of sonship is the leading of the Spirit. Primarily, of course, it refers to leading in paths of holiness, of assurance and all that we have already looked at—the opposite of the flesh. But can we exclude the widest use of the term? "He leadeth me in paths of righteousness," does not exclude the service to which the Lord calls us, nor anything where we need His guidance.

What a comfort then to have the leading of the Spirit in all that we do; not to be left to sight, "for we walk by faith, not by sight." Not to be left even to the example of godly saints, helpful as that is, but to be led by the blessed Spirit, in each detail of life, in the use of time, as to our intercourse, as to duties, as to expenditure of money, as to service—all that we need,—to be led of the Spirit of God. What a comfort! Are you thus led?

I quote another scripture bearing upon guidance, and a wholesome corrective of that tendency to mysticism so attractive to many. "He that is spiritual discerneth all things" (1 Cor. ii. 15). The Spirit of God has in His Holy Person the intelligence of God; that is what is emphasized in Him. You will understand that I do not mean, of course, to limit this attribute to Him, or to make it more prominent than other attributes as of love and power. But the chapter from which I have quoted em-

phasizes knowledge, intelligence, as the characteristic of the Spirit. "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God."

So in one led of the Spirit, intelligence in divine things will be prominent. He will discern, understand what the will of the Lord is. Here we are at the mercy of no vague impressions which we are blindly to follow. Our patience and faith may be tested by the lack of guidance, as we have seen; but we will not be left to uncertainty, or to unintelligent impressions. Paul's vision of the man of Macedonia formed the basis of a clear discernment of what the mind of the Spirit was.

But to be intelligent in the things of God means to have a knowledge of His mind as given in His Word. To discern, we must have those principles of truth only found in the Scriptures, and the spiritual man is ever a lover of the word of God. With that Word dwelling in him, not in a coldly intellectual way, but as controlling his thoughts, enlightening his conscience and guiding his affections, he has placed at the disposal of the Holy Spirit, the instrument by which he will be made of quick understanding. He will *know* the mind of the Spirit and thus be guided. How immensely important is this.

I add a word which seems in place here. Nothing is more repulsive to a truly spiritual mind, and grieving to the Spirit of God than a lofty assumption of spiritual guidance. A sanctified walk is ever a walk of retirement. The man who is most subject to the guidance is the one who will lay the least claims to being guided. He will be very slow to say, "The Lord led me here, or there." Guidance is largely for the closet and as we look into the eye of God. There are things to be enjoyed rather than talked about. How sad to hear these sacred themes chatted about in a familiar way as though one had a remarkable experience, which had now become a sort of

second nature to which he was quite accustomed. Such practices degrade these high and holy themes to us, and they lose their power over our souls. Is it not true, dear brethren, that for most of us guidance is the result of painful exercise, in which we have been compelled to see and confess much of pride and self-will, and other faults which we would not like to speak of publicly?

Our God is holy. Oh to realize that more deeply! How subdued and chastened we would be. We would not talk very much about our guidance, but better than that we would *be* guided. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him."

I had mentioned ministry in the power of the Spirit as a closing subject for this lecture, but that has practically been our theme all through. Little remains that I can say. All ministry is by the Spirit of God. I have already spoken of ordination, and will not recur to it here. The Spirit calls, selects, and sends forth whom He chooses. He also abundantly sustains and guides them.

Of preparation for ministry I need say little. The main preparation is in the secret life and with the word of God. An education, even an intellectual knowledge of Scripture, is not preparation for the ministry. Far be it from me to decry true knowledge. Let us covet to know more and more. Let us seek ability to read the Scriptures in the original tongues; let us study history, archaeology—everything that can illustrate the truths of God; let us know more of that world of nature all about us, that speaks of God and of Christ to the attentive and devout soul. But these are not necessarily the preparation for ministry. The Spirit of God may use any and all of these, but He and He alone can prepare a man for ministry.

How often has He done a vast work in the conversion of souls through some "unlearned and ignorant" man.

How often has the humble artisan a deeper, broader knowledge of divine truth than the learned professor. Surely God will stain the pride of man, He will not let us boast. It ever remains that the Holy Spirit amply qualifies every vessel whom He may choose for the ministry. Do not be afraid that the ardent young evangelist, on fire with love to God and souls, will fail to be used because his grammar is not perfect and he knows but "one thing." Ah, brethren, the man who knows one thing is the man who will speak in the demonstration of the Spirit and of power.

But on the other hand every true minister of Christ will hunger for greater fitness, and a fuller knowledge. It will be, however, knowledge of the word of God which he craves, and to that he will give time and prayer beyond all else. I need hardly refer to educational institutions; most of the secular, and alas many of the religious, are in the hands of the enemy. Where infidelity is taught, where the word of God is dissected and criticized—these are not places for godly youth to learn the truth and ways of God. If they go there, it should be as doubly armed against all the subtlety of the enemy. Sad, indeed, it is to give such a warning; sadder still the necessity for it.

Then too, as to reading of truly helpful books, of association with Christ's servants, of individual study under the eye of some one of experience—all this is of the greatest value and help, when once the one great fact is learned—the absolute necessity of the Spirit's presence and power. This is not the place for discussion of these matters. We do not find them treated in Scripture, though much is scriptural in them. My conviction is that large numbers of students in one institution, with nothing to engage their activities save study, will not develop so rapidly and so surely as smaller companies gathered less

formally, for briefer seasons and with much work for the Lord interspersed between the times of study. We are living in days of great institutions, richly endowed, with brilliant professors and attractive courses of study. The danger is lest the Holy Person of whom we speak be forgotten. Let us pray that it may not be.

I have been speaking of preparation for ministry; the same principles apply in its exercise. Liberty must ever be left for the Spirit of God. Settled pastorates, as they are called, do not seem to be of His appointment, as a rule. The scriptural examples would point rather to a passing from one place to another of those with special gift, that room be left for the exercise of less prominent ones. The evangelist does his work and passes on to another field of labor; so with the teacher; leaving behind them others stirred and helped for exercise of similar gifts. Thus an assembly would profit by the varied gifts of the Spirit, one after another, and all would receive profit, while the activities would not be narrowed down to a few, to the weakening of the many. This but touches a subject I must leave to be pursued elsewhere.

I have been speaking, in ministry, of what is ordinarily understood by the term. It is hardly necessary to say that it includes *all* true service, the lowliest and most obscure, as well as the greatest. The ministry of women has a place and an importance as well as that of men—and every activity of the body of Christ is included in the term. All that is needed is, as I have endeavored to show, to be a broken vessel that the Spirit of God may use us.

I close with a thought as to gospel ministry to the unsaved. That has marked the Holy Spirit's work from the beginning and will do so till the Lord come. Any testimony which ignores this, or makes it optional will cease to have the Lord's approval. The gospel spirit is

the spirit of Christ. I do not now speak of the evangelist, but rather of us all. Do we love souls? do we long to see them saved? then we will all be ready to give the gospel to others. This readiness shows the state of soul. It is hard to speak of Christ if we are not in communion; it is hard not to speak of Him when we are. How this searches us.

This is what is needed—hearts for the salvation of souls. Oh for us all to be soul winners! We would not wait for an evangelist; we would not wait for meetings. At work, in casual intercourse, by a little tract—in countless ways we would be seeking to win souls for Christ. Dear brethren, let us pray that the Spirit of God may arouse us to this—His great work in the salvation of souls.

"'PRAISE ye the Lord,' again, again,
The Spirit strikes the chord;
Nor toucheth He our hearts in vain;
We praise, we praise the Lord.

'Rejoice in Him,' again, again,
The Spirit speaks the word,
And faith takes up the happy strain;
Our joy is in the Lord.

'Stand fast *in Christ*,' ah, yet again
He teacheth all the band!
If human efforts are in vain,
In Christ it is we stand.

'Clean ev'ry whit;' Thou saidst it, Lord;
Shall one suspicion lurk?
Thine, surely, is a faithful word,
And Thine a finished work.

Forever be the glory given
To Thee, O Lamb of God!
Our ev'ry joy on earth, in heaven,
We owe it to Thy blood."

LECTURE VI

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SCRIPTURES:

INSPIRATION; ENLIGHTENMENT; PROPHECY.

"WHEN Israel, by divine command,
The pathless desert trod,
They found, throughout the barren land,
A sure resource in God.

A cloudy pillar marked the road,
And screened them from the heat;
From the hard rock the water flowed,
And manna was their meat.

Like them, we have a rest in view,
Secure from hostile powers;
Like them, we pass a desert too,
But Israel's God is ours.

His word a light before us spreads,
By which our path we see;
His love, a banner o'er our heads,
From harm preserves us free.

Jesus, the Bread of life, is given
To be our daily food;
Within us dwells that well from heaven,
The Spirit of our God.

Lord, 'tis enough, we ask no more;
Thy grace around us pours
Its rich and unexhausted store,
And all its joy is ours."

OUR subject this evening is such a large one, that we can at best but glance at its various parts, getting in this way at least an outline. I think we may divide what is to be before us into three main parts—inspiration, enlightenment, and prophecy. These will give us the Spirit in connection with the word of God under three aspects: inspiration speaks of the divine au-

thorship and perfection of the Word; enlightenment, its unfolding to our understanding; and prophecy, its application to conscience and heart for practical uses. This will appear as we proceed.

First, then, as to inspiration. There are two scriptures which will furnish us with material here. I will quote them first: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17).* "Knowing this first that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Pet. i. 20, 21).

From these two passages we learn first, that all Scripture is of divine origin, it is inspired; secondly, that it was given for a purpose, our profit and the unfolding of the mind of God; thirdly, that the Spirit of God, as Author, made use of human instruments in giving us the word of God. We will then carry on our investigations

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* I have retained the rendering of our Authorized Version as giving the meaning of the original as nearly as any. The omission of the verb "is" is common enough as any student of the Greek Testament knows, and is evidently to be supplied in translation in order to convey the meaning of the original. It seems to me that the rendering of the Revised Version is unfortunate, as implying, to the casual reader, that some scriptures are inspired and others may not be. There is no such thought in the original, entirely the reverse, nor did the Revisers intend to convey this thought. The Authorized Version, and the margin of the R. V. are correct translations of that portion. As to whether "all" or "every" should be used, the general meaning is not affected whichever is taken. The identical expression is used elsewhere when "the whole," "all" is evidently the meaning. See Acts ii. 36, "the whole house of Israel;" Eph. ii. 21, "all the building."

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as to inspiration under these heads: its infallible perfection, the purpose for which it was given, and the instruments used.

Let us turn now to Scripture, and see how it speaks of itself. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son" (Heb. i. 1, 2). Here we learn that, no matter what the dispensation, or who was the instrument, *God spake*. The Scriptures are the voice of God, the word of God. Let us settle this as the great foundation fact. It is God and not man who has spoken. I say it deliberately, weighing the statement carefully, that this is the great basis for all our knowledge of the word of God. It is *His* word. He who fails to see this has no foundation for his faith. This great fact eclipses all other facts, however true they may be. We lose sight, for the time being, of time, manner, and instruments: the Lord hath spoken.

This controls the entire subject. If God has spoken, it were blasphemy to think He had spoken imperfectly; that He has left His words to be mixed with error, to be sifted out by the skill of man. Has He spoken so that He cannot be understood? Thus this great fact of divine authorship settles completely a vast mass of questions which unbelief alone could raise. For it is unbelief and nothing else which intrudes its rationalistic theories into this great question. "God spake all these words."

Further, if God has spoken, He has done so with a purpose in view, and in a manner consistent with His character, His wisdom. He has not thrown the material together in a hap-hazard way. If His world, down to the arrangement of its smallest atoms, the growth of its minutest life-germs, is a perfect expression of design and conformity to order, surely His word which He has "magnified above," or as it has been translated, "ac-

cording to all His Name," is no less perfect. We will look at this more fully later on. I speak of it here as part of the foundation of our most holy faith. We have a divine, a perfect Book because it has proceeded from a perfect, a divine source.

This explains why the babes know so much more than the wise and prudent. They have accepted the truth that God has spoken, and therefore, they do not "stumble at the word." Much of it they do not understand, but they expect that in an infinitely perfect word. They do however understand more than the wise, for the simple reason that they believe God. A subject mind and heart is after all of the greatest value. "The meek He will guide in judgment."

But with what reverence and godly fear should we take up this holy revelation. It is the word of God. Well may we stand in awe, with prostrate hearts, and awakened consciences. Privilege it is, unspeakable blessing too, to have this precious book; but let us never forget Whose book, Whose word it is.

It is said we are living in a Bible age. The open Book is all about us. It is being read and studied as never before. For this we can thank God; but, beloved friends, I will not conceal from you the fact that, as never before, we are living in an age of unbelief in the Bible. I do not now speak of the world; we expect nothing but unbelief and enmity from that which "lieth in the wicked one." Infidelity has long since ceased to be merely characteristic of avowed unbelievers; in the bosom of the professing church we find it now. Paine, with his "Age of reason" was once looked upon with horror, as a typical infidel. Alas, Paine's teachings are now heard from many a professor's chair and from many a pulpit. Do I exaggerate? Oh, brethren, look abroad, read the openly avowed views of many of the religious leaders in college and pulpit, and

answer for yourselves. Hear what they have to say about the word of God; see what Higher criticism has left of that perfect Word, and go to your closet and weep.

I speak of this, seeking to check the tide of feeling that struggles for expression, in order to emphasize the point upon which we are dwelling: God has spoken; He has spoken in a way consistent with Himself, His wisdom and perfections. This we hold fast, remembering that to yield here one iota will be to let in the thin edge of the wedge. By God's grace we will not allow it for a moment.

But I turn to another scripture. "Wherefore, as the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 7). A passage is quoted from the book of Psalms (Ps. xcv. 7–11), and its Author is the Holy Ghost. In this particular psalm, the human author is not mentioned, but the divine One is. The instrument, as it were, is eclipsed. Frequently, as we shall see, the human authors are mentioned, but by no means is this always the case. A large number of the Psalms are anonymous; nor are we sure as to who wrote many of the historical books. Is there not instruction in this very omission? "The Holy Ghost saith"—if He has not been pleased tell us by whom, does it weaken His message? If we receive a message from one well known, through one whom we do not know, but who is merely a messenger, does it invalidate the message? But how blessed and yet solemn is this fact; this Book, which we can hold in our hands, and carry about with us, has been written by God the Holy Ghost.

But this expression shows how God has been pleased to give us His Word. "God spake," but it was through the Holy Spirit. He, as we have frequently seen, is the divine executive. He is not Himself visible, nor does He ordinarily work, as we might say, in a visible way.

His methods are spiritual and moral. He uses instruments. This brings us to the word that naturally expresses His work in the production of the Scriptures, inspiration. The Scriptures have not been written, as the ten commandments, "with the finger of God." Our holy Book has not fallen out of heaven, or been dug out of the earth. Blasphemous impostors, such as the founder of Mormonism, may claim to have discovered "golden plates," inscribed with strange and heavenly characters, which he was enabled to read by means of a marvelous pair of glasses—the Urim and Thummim! But all such grotesque and blasphemous foolishness is utterly foreign to the thought of inspiration. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God"—God-breathed. Just as He breathed into man's nostrils, and he became a living, intelligent being, in the image of God, so, with all proper limitations necessary, the Spirit has been breathed into the Word, or has breathed the mind of God into what is thus His own voice for man.

Man is ever occupied with methods, ever asking *how* has God acted. This may be proper when asked with reverence, but first of all, we must believe that God has acted. When we come later on to speak of the human instruments, we will endeavor to gather what God has been pleased to reveal as to this; here I simply remind you that as it is the Holy Spirit who has inspired the Word, we may expect that He will make use of such means as He has always done.

We turn to another passage in this epistle to the Hebrews, from which we have already twice quoted: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing" (chap. ix. 8). Here we have the Spirit again spoken of as Author, though the human instrument is in this case well known. Moses gave minute

directions as to the construction of the tabernacle, and the ritual of worship. He committed it all to writing, which we have to this day. But here we see Who made use of Moses—the Holy Ghost.

But I want you to notice something else. Godly persons will heartily agree with what has been said as to inspiration, and infallibility, and yet they will often overlook what lies at the very basis of inspiration—the *purpose* of the Spirit of God. For instance, we see in this passage not merely that the Holy Spirit has secured an absolutely accurate and perfect account of the tabernacle, but that His purpose in this record was to show, for instance, that the way into the holiest was not yet manifest. We shall presently see, when coming to the purpose of God in inspiration, what an immense field of truth this opens up. To me there is something pathetic in the loyalty of very many of the saints of God. They accept inspiration, and with their whole hearts bow to Scripture; they had rather be burned at the stake than give up faith in the least jot or tittle of the written Word. Bless God for such loyalty! but how sad it is to see these faithful ones ignorant of the purpose of God in giving us the Scripture.

I quote a few other scriptures as to authorship. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, etc." (1 Tim. iv. 1). I think we have here a link between other scriptures, and that which was flowing from the pen of the apostle at this time. The Spirit had frequently spoken of this departure in the latter days. In one of his earliest epistles the apostle had spoken of it (2 Thess. iii. 2). Peter and John give their testimony (2 Pet. iii. 3; 1 Jno. ii. 18, 19). No thoughtful reader of Scripture can fail to see that this is the uniform testimony of the Spirit of God, "He speaketh expressly." Paul as he writes to Timothy, simply

serves as the channel for this fresh testimony of the Holy Spirit.

The word "expressly" is interesting, as showing the distinctness and definiteness of the word of God. There is nothing vague or uncertain about it. Every statement has a definite meaning, which can be ascertained. It is a reproach to think of the Word as many do, meaning anything you want it. It is not unbelievers alone who think, if they do not say, "You can get proof for anything out of the Bible." This has given rise to creeds. Man must say "expressly" what the Spirit of God has not made sufficiently clear. Of course, this would be disclaimed, but why, let us ask, should there be a human statement of doctrine if the divine one is sufficient?

You cannot trust the word of God too implicitly. You need not fear that it will prove inaccurate in some minor detail. In that sense there can be no minor details. As a matter of fact, these minute details are gems of exceptional beauty.

In this connection a verse from the first epistle to the Corinthians is of interest: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Cor. ii. 12, 13). This last clause has been rendered more correctly according to the original, "Communicating spiritual things by spiritual means."* The context bears this rendering out beautifully. The apostle had received truth from the Spirit; he communicated it in the words taught by the Spirit, thus employing a spiritual medium for spiritual communications.

* See J. N. D's Version of the New Testament, with accompanying note.

But, dear brethren, how this settles completely the question of verbal inspiration. You have heard the statement that the Scriptures *contain* the word of God, implying that they contain other matter also. Here we are assured that the vehicle is as inspired as the message. If you will allow a homely illustration, it is not as if a person in the country, desiring to send in some produce into the city, had put it into a wagon passing by, already containing a considerable quantity of other things. In such a case at the journey's end, the contents would have to be distinguished and separated to their respective owners. But, thank God, you do not have to sift out God's truth from something that is not that. You do not have, as a certain popular but unsound writer has put it, to separate the chaff from the wheat. It is all wheat, and nothing needs to be eliminated. The *words* are those taught by the Holy Ghost.

So far we have been considering the divine authorship of the Bible. We have seen that it is God who has spoken, the Holy Spirit who has inspired this Book; that this was not merely to secure accuracy of detached parts, but for the purpose of unfolding a divine plan; that this inspiration is therefore express and minute, as well as general, and that it reaches down to the very words. Necessarily in speaking thus of the authorship, we have touched upon features of the Book itself, but I want now to look more closely at the testimony for the absolute perfection of Scripture. It grows out of the fact of its authorship. If God is its Author, as we have seen, it must be perfect; but we are not left to reason about it.

"The Scripture cannot be broken" (John x. 35). As we have had frequent occasion to remark, the connection of passages is of great interest, and oftentimes furnishes the key to the special application or meaning. It is so here. Our Lord is quoting what some might be tempted

to call an obscure passage from the Psalms (Ps. lxxxii. 6). It is to the effect that judges in Israel, because they stood for God's authority and were the executors of His Word, were called "gods"—"I said ye are gods." They were His representatives. Now, our Lord says this Scripture cannot be broken—cannot be set aside. It is simply an obvious explanation, men might say, of no great importance, and yet our Lord declares it cannot be ignored. It is a part of a perfect whole. So He goes on to apply it to His own position; how much more was it true of Him whom the Father had sanctified and sent into the world.

How solemn for men, professed believers, to attempt to "break," to mar, a single line of that holy Word. It would be wisdom, compared with this, to break a delicate and beautiful vase, under the plea that you recognized the beauty of a part of it—to rend out a delicate shade in a rich fabric, while professing to admire all the rest. Every word and syllable is woven into this Scripture, and you cannot rend any without tearing the whole asunder. Think of this when you hear men pleading that a single line or word should be eliminated as imperfect.

Connected with this is a similar Scripture: "Verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled" (Matt. v. 18). This reminds us of another passage in the 119th Psalm: "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven." How careful our Lord was to magnify the word of God—to guard against the thought that He had come to deny it or set it aside, save as it was fulfilled. The "jot and tittle," as you know, were the smallest marks in the Hebrew alphabet, the jot, or yodh, answering to our "i"—a very small letter in Hebrew—and the tittle not a letter at all, but a small mark to distinguish one letter from another; so that we might paraphrase it, "not a dot to an 'i,' or a cross to a 't.'"

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Here is where our Lord stood, whether in conflict with Satan, as in His temptation, or in presenting the truth of God. He ever magnified the written Word.*

We have a most beautiful illustration of our Lord's jealous care for the fulfilment of the very smallest statement of Scripture at the close of His life. He is hang-

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*It is interesting to see this in its immediate connection in the Sermon on the Mount. Our Lord goes on to speak of a number of the legal ordinances which He apparently contradicted. It was said by, or to, them of old time, "Thou shalt not commit adultery;" "Thou shalt not kill." He applies these laws to the inner man, thus enforcing them in a far stronger way. As to oaths, He knew well man's inability to perform His vows, and so warned against doing that which the law could only condemn. He Himself was to undertake a vow and to pay it to the very last requirement, thus fulfilling the law of vows. The law of retaliation, in a legal, not a personal way, had doubtless been abused by those who were only too ready to give "an eye for an eye." Our Lord takes the personal element out, and puts in its place that grace and mercy which have been shown to the child of God. Thus He did not make void the law. I might add that when it came to *His* taking the place of the offending sinner, the basis of strict justice was maintained, and He had to bear all the wrath of a holy God against sin—to be made a curse for us.

It will be found thus that our Lord never contradicted the law, in the sense of declaring it was wrong. He corrected man's abuse of it, and added other principles. In some cases He showed that commands were of a partial and temporary character. For instance, in the matter of divorce, Moses was quoted as sanctioning a man's putting away his wife. Our Lord shows why Moses permitted it—"for the hardness of your hearts" (Matt. xix. 3–9). The law restrained the lawless and selfish lust that would have asserted itself at all costs, and required that the divorce it permitted should only be carried out in a strictly legal way, calculated to limit its abuse. Thus far the law went—"it was weak through the flesh." Our Lord does not contradict this, but *adds to it*, by forbidding all divorce, save in one instance. It will be found that this principle permeates the entire New Testament. The law is ever magnified.

ing upon the cross. Competent authorities tell us that death by crucifixion was not only excruciating, but that intense thirst was one of its most painful features. Without doubt, our Lord had this thirst in all its intensity, for He had refused any stupefying draught. He says, "I thirst"—just what any sufferer in a similar position would have said; but *why* does He say it? Was it to relieve His own sufferings? "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst" (John xix. 28). In the 69th Psalm, the Spirit of God had prophetically declared for Him: "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink" (verse 21). Everything had been accomplished—His betrayal, trial, rejection by His own people, His disciples scattered, the mocking of the Gentiles, the scorn and railing—He is about to yield up His Spirit to His Father; but one small prediction remained, and for that reason He permits His intense suffering to be known. Blessed Jesus! "That the Scriptures might be fulfilled."

The evangelist, as He goes on with the narrative, shows the same fulfilment of Scripture—"a bone of Him shall not be broken," the true Passover Lamb, and "they shall look on Him whom they pierced." These might be called incidentals, in no way necessary for the general accuracy of Scripture; but you will find there are no such things as incidentals in the word of God.

How all this accords with our theme, the literal inspiration by the Holy Spirit. He presided over all. He uttered the predictions in Old Testament type and prophecy, and He records their fulfilment in the New. Accept this truth of the Spirit's inspiration, and the word of God becomes luminous. We see its priceless value even to minutest details, and we will handle it reverently.

Permit me to detain you a little longer on a few of these minute details. Turn to Galatians iv. 22–31. Here

we have allusion to what seems in Genesis to be a very simple matter—Abraham's relations with Hagar. But the apostle tells us that the Spirit of God had some other end in view than the narration of an interesting episode in the patriarch's life: "which things are an allegory;" and the apostle proceeds to show the secrets hidden by the Spirit in that narrative—the relationships of law and grace. But notice the details: There are two covenants, Hagar answering to Sinai and the legal covenant with Israel, and this answering to "Jerusalem that now is," in bondage. The naturally barren Sarah is made a joyful mother; the child of the bond-servant is cast out—Scripture is quoted both from Genesis and from Isaiah, and all connected with what seems a simple piece of Old Testament history.

Nor dare we think that this is an exceptional case. Other instances will occur to you, such as 1 Cor. x., Hebrews vii., Romans iv. These all are evidently but samples of an accuracy that pervades the entire volume, for we are told that "all these things happened unto them for types" (1 Cor. x. 11). We are to take all Scripture, and find, by patient, prayerful study, an accuracy of detail that is simply perfect.

Just look at the use made of the singular, rather than the plural number: "He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. iii. 16). It would be called the extreme of fanciful interpretation if we were to adduce such points, and yet this is the method of the Spirit of God, who thus shows that Christ was in His mind from the beginning.

But it may be objected that there is in Scripture very much that is not true, and how can that be inspired? Undoubtedly we have, for instance, the falsehood of Satan to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die"; his temptation of our blessed Lord; his misquotation of Scripture, and

so on. We have also the utterances of enemies to God and to His people. Pharaoh's contempt, Goliath's challenge, are instances of this. Further, we have the well-meaning but mistaken expressions of men who thought they were honoring God, as the three friends of Job. Job himself is a striking instance of one who knows God, uttering things that he knew not. At the close of his experience he confesses this; so that it would be folly for us to endorse as true what Job had condemned as wrong. I will remind you that many quotations are taken from the book of Job by annihilationists to prove the non-existence of the soul after death; but when you remember they were the utterances of one speaking in unbelief, apart entirely from dispensational questions, it will be seen how unwarranted such use is.

We can go further, and freely admit that the entire book of Ecclesiastes is written from the standpoint of earthly wisdom. In it we see the struggles of a mind looking closely at life, without the aid of revelation. He says many wise things, many true things, but all is, as I said, from the standpoint of sight, of earth. For instance, could we quote as a divine truth such a statement as this? "That which befalleth the sons of men, befalleth beasts: as the one dieth so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity" (Eccles. iii. 19). Is this the language of God—of faith? Surely not.

But then, says the objector, what becomes of your theory of verbal inspiration? The mistake is in confounding infallible inspiration with the contents of what is revealed. To illustrate, a man might be a perfectly accurate reporter, able to take down every word of an address. It would be a great mistake to confound his *report* of the address with the contents of the address. The report might be a faithful representation of what was said, but

what was said might be far from true. So the blessed Spirit of God has given us an inspired report of what Satan and these others have said; but what a mistake to confound this accuracy with an endorsement of what was said.

Further, the Spirit has recorded these things in their proper setting. He had a definite purpose, for instance, in presenting the report of the various conversations in Job, and everything is so given that we get a perfectly true representation of what was said, and are prepared for the final outcome. The same could be said of the book of Ecclesiastes. It is as though the Spirit of God had said, I will give you a specimen of the best reasoning of the wisest of men. It is no garbled report, but a perfectly true picture of his mind. But you can always see what is of this character, and that which is the direct revelation of the mind of God. All taken together gives us the perfect book that He would have us know, enjoy and obey.

While upon the subject of the infallible inspiration of Scripture, I will say a few words upon the texts, versions, etc. To be very simple, you know that until a late date all copies were made by pen. The accuracy of these copies depended, of course, upon the care of the copyist. But, even with the greatest care, it was impossible, humanly speaking, to keep out all errors. We find, therefore, that among the hundreds of manuscripts there are a large number of small variations. Most of these scarcely affect the meaning at all, being slight omissions or insertions of letters, small words, etc. Other cases occur where the meaning of a certain verse may be altered; but I think I am safe in saying that in no one manuscript is there embodied a false doctrine, or a true one eliminated. It is certainly a great mercy of God that He has preserved His truth uncontaminated through all these centuries.

The version ordinarily in use was made from a text based chiefly on manuscripts of a late date. Since that time much earlier manuscripts have been discovered or examined. Other things being equal, the earlier the date of the manuscript, the greater its accuracy. Careful study examines all the manuscripts and reaches a text which is best supported by the oldest and most reliable authorities. Our knowledge of the text has therefore improved since the King James version was made.

Then, too, as was to be expected, a continued study has given a clearer understanding of the original languages, and this has enabled students to get a clearer meaning from obscure passages in the original. This will explain what is meant by a Revised, or New Version, many of which have been made, and some of which are helpful in Bible study.

But I wish to make two remarks. First, with all the aids of better knowledge of the original and of earlier manuscripts, it remains a fact that this version which we hold in our hands—the Authorized Version—is marvelously free from blemishes. To all intents and purposes it is a faithful representation of the original Scriptures. The simple, untutored Christian who knows nothing of Hebrew and Greek can take it up with confidence as the perfect word of God. No vital truth is clouded in it a a whole. What a comfort this is! And I believe we can see in it a proof of the providential care of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit during times of great darkness and of persecution.

My other remark is one of sorrow. All examination of the originals, collecting of manuscript readings, versions,

etc., is a proper and most useful employment. It is usually called "textual criticism," or a judgment as to the text, based on the various readings, etc., of different manuscripts. In contrast with this, there is another form of judgment, miscalled "higher criticism," whose purpose it is to judge of the text by its contents, and to accept or reject it according to certain standards adopted by the critics. In this way, judging, and most often mistakenly, by differences of style, new words and supposed doctrines or opinions, the books of the Bible have been cut to pieces. The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch is rejected, its date of composition made much later, and practically the Spirit of God is ignored and despised. I have no hesitation in declaring this form of criticism, as usually pursued, to be a work of Satan. It is not within our sphere to examine it. I can only say it has laid its unclean hands upon well nigh every portion of God's word, and as a result has robbed those who are ensnared of a faith in that Word.

Higher criticism is the fashion of the day, and yet, like all fashions, it constantly changes. The critics cannot themselves agree, and, while one is more rabid than another, all unite in a denial of that which we have seen lies at the very foundation of a true faith—a belief in the infallible inspiration of the word of God. There are some persons of apparent, and, one would fain hope, of true piety, who allow the thin edge of the wedge of unbelief to be introduced. Such persons are but baits to lure the unwary into the snares of the enemy. Their sincerity and earnestness make them all the more dangerous. A deceiver who is also self-deceived is the most dangerous of all deceivers.

But it is time for us to return to the thread of our theme, and to take up the next point in our subject. We have been dwelling upon the perfections of the word of

God, as having the Spirit of God for its author, and as without any blemish or imperfection. Our next inquiry should be very helpful: For what purpose was this Word given, and is there a clearly defined purpose running through it? Let us look at a few passages.

"Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on Him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 23–25).

What I want to notice here is the purpose of the Spirit of God in writing in the book of Genesis (chap. xv. 5, 6) that Abraham was justified. I begin with this because of its great simplicity. Why was this written? *For our sakes.* Your faith and mine, dear brethren, is just as dear to God as Abraham's. God has recorded His appreciation of that for our sakes.

Simply apply that principle as broadly as Scripture will let you. You come to a promise—to a statement of the blessedness of the believer, of present grace and of future glory—and you can say, "It was written for my sake." It reminds one of the gleaner Ruth gathering in the fields of Boaz, and little realizing that the handfuls of golden grain she was gathering had been "let fall of purpose" for her. It seems to me that this is a helpful and sanctifying thought. It makes the Bible a personal book—one in which I have a very direct interest. I fear there is too little of this personal appropriation in our reading of Scripture. We will presently see a wide purpose of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, but let us take the comfort of this personal thought first.

Nor is this merely for what we might call our assurance. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our *learning*, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. xv. 4).

Here the purpose is wider; the purpose of these Scriptures is our learning—our instruction in the ways of God. The very connection shows us an application of the 69th Psalm to Christ, written for our learning, that we might not be unskilful users of the Word.

Further, it was to be applied to the conscience as well. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (or types), and they are written for our *admonition*, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11). You will remember that in a Scripture already quoted we saw that all Scripture was profitable; among other things, for reproof and correction. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, and our God loves His people too much to let them go unreproved when they need it. "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten" are words which are some of "what the Spirit saith unto the churches." Ah, if God's people would but hearken to these admonitions of His Spirit through the Word! How much would we be spared of chastening and sorrow, and how quickly would joy replace our groaning!

Thus in this personal way we find the purpose of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures to be our assurance, our instruction and our admonition. Let us now look beyond ourselves.

Every book by an intelligent author was written with a definite purpose. That purpose may have been more or less worthy—it may have been to amuse, or to instruct; it may have been to establish a theory, or to move to action. According to the skill and ability of the author, every part of the book would be in consistent accord with its main purpose. Lastly, that purpose would not be fully understood until the contents of the book were all known.

Now transfer this self-evident truth, in a reverent spirit, to the word of God. The Spirit of God is its author;

therefore there must be a divinely perfect purpose and a divinely perfect skill in unfolding that purpose. Every part of the book will be in perfect accord with that purpose; there will be no jarring—no inconsistency. We will not expect to know fully what that purpose is at first; we will not expect to have it entirely unfolded in the earlier portions. As we grow more and more familiar with its contents, we will find the purpose of the Divine Author more and more clearly developed.

I could wish I were more able to present this commanding thought in a worthy way. I can but hope to give you a glimpse of it, praying that this may awaken in your soul an insatiable longing to know the purpose of the Spirit of God in giving us the written Word.

There is one fact that must be before us, and more particularly in the Old Testament. The Book is a record —a history of things as they are. There is no forcing of events in an artificial or unnatural way. The characters are described without the least effort at what might be called "dressing up" for appearances. In this the absolute truthfulness of God's word is in striking contrast with ordinary biography. In these latter, the subject appears simply in what is best. To judge from the narrative, one would gather that there were no faults to record. But when we come to the Scriptures, the very men whose faith is our example are shown as they were. Noah's faith in preparing the ark is not allowed to conceal his drunkenness after he came forth from it. Again and again are we told of the faith of Abraham; nor are his acts of unbelief overlooked. The same is true of Isaac and Jacob. Moses, the great leader and lawgiver, closes his life under the chastening hand of God, not permitted to enter the land. David, the king, the man after God's heart, is seen to be subject to like passions with ourselves. His sins are recorded with the same detail as his acts of faith.

Turning to the nation of Israel, the same features are present. The impression one gets from reading of their rise, development and subsequent history is the reverse of admiration. Unbelief, self-will, vacillation and apostasy are written large over well nigh every page of their history. "It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways." Under whatever form of rule—divinely called leaders, judges, kings—the result was the same.

Now, this is most remarkable, particularly when we remember that, humanly speaking, the narrators were describing their own shame—they were writing the history of their own nation. It was not from lack of patriotism, for you find many instances of that all through. Our wonder is increased when we remember that these were various authors, writing at widely separated periods, and in diverse styles; but this faithful delineation of faults and failures is their general characteristic.

Look at the prophets, for instance. Their hearts are breaking with their message of woe, but not a single sin do they hide. They would die for their nation, but they will not lie for it.

The explanation of this is perfectly simple, when we remember the Author of the Book and His purpose. That purpose was not to glorify man individually or as a nation, but to unfold the thoughts and counsels of God regarding man in the condition in which he was found.

The one solemn fact confronting omnipotence itself was that He had to deal with sin—with sinful men. He might, we might well conceive, have let judgment, swift and final, fall at once upon our guilty parents in the Garden of Eden. But His counsels of grace were not to be thwarted. Those counsels centered in His beloved Son, and must be fulfilled. Man is a free moral agent, and

thus responsible. He is away from God, and must be brought back. He is not to be forced back against his will, nor will this wondrous work be effected without fullest opportunity to manifest the utter and hopeless alienation of man.

Therefore he is left largely to himself, and soon shows that murder and violence are all he is capable of. The flood checks this, in mercy hindering for a time his awful lawlessness.

God puts him under government, under Noah, and that man may not think this was effectual to bless and help, He shows us the first ruler incapable of governing his own appetites. Finally order is changed for the confusion of Babel and the scattering of the nations. Such is government in man's hands.

He now calls out select individuals, to whom He entrusts His truth until the time arrives for the establishment of a chosen nation. What are Abraham and the patriarchs without the restraining mercy of God? They emphasize the one need of faith—the obedience of faith —and their very falls emphasize it more strongly.

With the nation of Israel, still greater privileges are given, and the fall is correspondingly more hopeless. Miracles are shown before them—the love and care of God in providing for their needs is manifest. They are brought out from bondage, guarded as the apple of His eye, and brought into the land. Hedged about from the nations, ministered to in countless ways, recovered times without number when they forsook Him, of what use were their privileges? The captivity of the ten tribes, and, later, of the two, tell that both kings and people had utterly departed from the Lord, "until there was no remedy." Is not the purpose of God manifest in all this —to show the utter and hopeless ruin of man, and the absolute need of a divine Redeemer? This is what any

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thoughtful reader will gather from the perusal of the Old Testament.

Did time and our main subject permit, I would speak of the giving of the law, and show for what purpose it was given. The apostle dwells upon this in the epistle to the Galatians. Man is constantly excusing himself, constantly demanding other and greater privileges, more light, better opportunities. The heathen may say, "I did not know the will of God, or I would have obeyed." So the law is given, with the result that it simply brings out the hopeless enmity of the natural heart.

I have intentionally dwelt first upon the dark side. The purpose of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures is manifestly, as well as declaratively, to prove, in every possible condition, the one solemn fact that man is a guilty, helpless sinner. He lets man speak for himself, narrating infallibly his works, words, ways and motives. The result is, man proves himself to be what God declares him. This conviction is pressed upon us with irresistible force as we read our Bibles. The more familiar we get with their contents, the clearer this divine purpose shines through. "The Scripture hath concluded *all* under sin."

But, blessed be God, He has had other purposes in view, even the salvation of men through the work of Christ, His Son. So as you read this inspired Word you find, from the early beginning, intimations of this grace. The coverings of skins for man's nakedness, Abel's sacrifice, the ark; the sheltering blood of the Passover lamb, the deliverance through the Red Sea—all suggested a redemption of which they were but the pictures.

These types of redemption are not thrown in at haphazard, but are placed at the pivotal points in the history of individuals and of the nation. The reader has a growing conviction that, to have to do with God, one must approach Him by sacrifice; to be shielded from judgment,

one must have the blood sprinkled; to pass out of bondage into liberty, one must enter into what witnesses of death. Look at the entire Jewish ritual. It is access by blood—worship by sacrifice. It is through sacrifice that the love, care and mercy of God flow out. Thus we see the purpose of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures.

Look, too, at the individuals who are raised up as deliverers or leaders. Look at the official dignitaries. All speaks of a divine purpose. These men are types of a Coming Man. Their very weaknesses and failures only emphasize the fact that they are "not the Christ." Moses is rejected at first, later to become leader of the people out of bondage. But, as type of Another, he speaks of a better deliverance by One not a servant, but a Son over God's house. He directs their eyes from himself to a greater Prophet whom the Lord would raise up. Aaron is priest, but increased familiarity with Scripture shows him but as a type—all the clearer upon the foil of his many weaknesses—of God's great High Priest. Garments and work, down to the minutest details, speak of some one infinitely more capable to act as Mediator between God and man. David is king, but the last sweet notes on his harp tell of that other King, who would be as the sun on a cloudless morning. All—all points onward to the coming of a Person whom leader, priest, king or prophet suggested, and yet made you feel the increased need of.

Take the dispensational ways of God, as recorded for us in that Holy Word. Do you not see a manifest purpose from the beginning? "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might head up in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth" (Eph. i. 10). The more deeply you plunge into the study of prophetic and dispensational truth, the more impressed do you become with this divine, intelligent pur-

pose of God to make His Son the centre of all blessing, and of the Holy Spirit in giving us a divine narrative of this purpose.

I have been speaking of what runs through the Book as a whole—one steady, consistent onward movement. Casual readers may notice what has been called "the progress of doctrine," but the devout student will be more and more impressed with the perfect knowledge from the beginning of the Divine Author, withholding full statements till their proper place, but giving from the beginning intimations and glimpses of what was before Him at all times.

The types of Scripture, clear, consistent, beautiful—ever leading us on further toward their fulfillment—are but fresh instances of all this. In fact, dear brethren, one must pity from the depths of his heart those who are ignorant of this wondrous indication of purpose running through every fibre of the Book.

Look at its structure—at the groups of single books into evident classes—at the significance of their various details—and your reverence will be deepened. Moses and the prophets as men will not absorb your attention; but you will realize that the Holy Spirit of God has produced for us this perfect picture of the divine mind.

I could speak of the unity of doctrine; also of the entire and absolute absence of contradiction in this Book. Who but a divine and controlling mind could have secured such results? There are new revelations, new orders of government—a complete flashing forth of the full light in the New Testament—but never a single word of contradiction. Is not that divine, and does it not tell of a divine Author?

You may have been struck with the character of the quotations of the Old Testament in the New. Infidelity might boast that they are not exact verbal quota-

tions, and so argue that they indicated imperfection. But examine these quotations, and what will you find? Some fresh and added truth now ready to be revealed. Take a familiar illustration. In the 40th Psalm, our Lord, by the Spirit, says: "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened" (verse 6). Here the opened ear evidently suggests that perfect obedience of our Lord. He had the wakened or opened ear, to hear, as one who is taught. Let us now read the quotation in the tenth chapter of Hebrews: "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared me" (verse 5). Here, in place of the opened ear—obedient to the least whisper—the Spirit gives the added fact, appropriate to the New Testament, of the incarnation of the Son of God. His whole earthly life was one perfect act of obedience. The body of His humiliation was but the vehicle of a perfect obedience to His Father's will.

I speak of this to show the freedom of the Spirit in making use of His own words. At the fitting time he makes use of what He had previously indited, and adds fresh and appropriate truth to it.

But I must close this part of the subject, again entreating you to study this Book with the one great desire to learn the purpose for which it was written. I have simply given a few of the great features; minute details would show the same. You can place the minutest portion under the microscope of the most searching inquiry, if it be only reverent, and find faultless perfection; you may sweep its infinite heavens with the telescope, only to discover divine harmony. Could there be anything else when God, the Holy Spirit, is its author?

It may be asked, How do we know that the Book is complete? If the Spirit of God is in the Church, why may He not give further revelations? One scripture answers that question, and disposes of all such blasphemous

imitations as the book of Mormon, for instance: "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil (or complete) the word of God" (Col. i. 25). The body of revelation was completed with the scriptures of Paul. No further unfolding of truth remains. In that which set forth the glories of Christ, and the Church as His body and bride, God's counsels are fully brought to light. Peter and John, in rounding out their ministry doubtless did write later than Paul, but they were simply finishing a ministry already begun, and adding no fresh line of truth. All was complete and all remains for us to read and ponder, to wonder at and praise God for, while we ourselves are transformed by its truths.

Having thus, weakly enough, dwelt upon that which is of greatest importance, the divine authorship of the word of God, and its absolute infallibility, I feel no hesitation in turning to what we may call the human element in it. As I have already mentioned, this term is ordinarily used to imply a certain measure of imperfection, and as though we could divide the Word into two parts, inspired and uninspired. I trust it is not necessary, for those of you who have followed me this far, to say any more upon that point. We are fully persuaded that absolute and inerrant perfection marks every page.

But for this very reason, we can with the fullest confidence take up the human side of the Bible, and learn some profitable lessons. We have already seen that the Spirit of God in the Scriptures gave us a perfectly accurate picture of the various characters described in it. In making use of the instruments through whom He spoke, He left them men,—endowed with their natural, and with their God-bestowed gifts—but simply men. The Book is intensely human; it is not merely written about men, but by men.

I would here recall a comparison, doubtless familiar to many, between the Word, the Son of God, and the written Word, the Scriptures. The first great fact to grasp is that "the Word was God"—the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Until that is absolutely clear in the soul, it is worse than foolish to speak of His humanity. Any one who denies in the fullest sense His deity, is unworthy to say a single word about His humanity. But when it is perfectly clear that He is God, we can then, to our comfort and profit, dwell upon the fact that, "the Word was made flesh."

So also in regard to the written Word. So long as there is a question as to its absolute perfection, we must refuse to consider the "human element," for it would but foster the spirit of unbelief. But once clear that we have nothing but "the word of God," and we can with the utmost freedom dwell upon the features which bring out the human side.

You will not misunderstand me when I say that, in one sense, the Bible is *all* human. All the instruments used in its production were men. No angel or spiritual being was used for this purpose, but "holy men spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." You find in its varied pages accurate pictures of the times of the writers; we are in Babylonia, in Egypt, in Palestine, as the case may be. We are living in the times of the Pharaohs, of Solomon's far reaching empire, or of Nebuchadnezzar's Gentile supremacy. In the New Testament, we are under the Roman yoke, and Greek civilization and culture are apparent. If I may so say, there is no precocity in the writers. Moses does not tell us of scientific discoveries in Astronomy, nor Job of the steam engine. Each writer is as artless and simple and natural as it is possible to conceive. And yet there is the conviction of each that God the Spirit is guiding, moving, and dictating. These

may not be called scientific books, as we ordinarily use that term, but they are not unscientific in the sense of being inaccurate. Nothing contradicts the latest dicoveries in the natural world. Without question, the Bible is a moral book, dealing with moral questions, but you will not find inaccurate statements in it upon any subject. It is silent upon that which man is left to find out for himself; but upon the great question of sin and God's remedy for it, and God's purposes—here, where science must be silent, the word of God is eloquent. No doubt a careful and reverent study of Scripture will constantly bring out beautiful harmonies between its statements and the facts of nature, for are they not—nature and Scripture—but two volumes by the same Author?

But, as I was saying, you find the human authors of the various books of the Bible to be men, men of the times in which they write. You find them, too, capable of feeling of a very intense character. Witness the tears of Jeremiah, the indignation of Isaiah, the sarcasm of Elijah, or Malachi. Go with Paul into the sanctuary, and hear his breathings of praise and worship. These are no mere automata, unintelligent, and uninterested in what they say; farthest from it. To be sure you will find them conscious of being used to utter things the depths of which they have not themselves fully fathomed, as the prophets "enquired and searched diligently, searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Pet. i. 10). They had further revelations as to these things, and fully realized they were uttering the mind and words of God. We are brought up against that fact constantly. Thus the fact of their being men never interferes with their being just the instruments of the Spirit of God.

And what varied instruments! Here is Moses, the man learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Here is David, the Royal Shepherd, with the echo of the sheepfolds, and the clash of battle still sounding through his psalms. Here is Isaiah the poet, taking loftier flights than ever poets dreamed of; and Amos almost uncouth in his bluntness, but striking just the note required. Peter the fisher, and Paul the scribe; Matthew a tax-collector, and Luke a physician. Each writes in his natural style, but each is after all only an instrument for another Hand to play upon, making not only individual harmony, but as an orchestra, uniting in a chorus, which speaks of the glories of the Christ of God.

Dear brethren, how the sovereignty of the Spirit of God shines out here! How the instruments are only that, simply yielded up for the Spirit of God to use. And this is the way Scripture speaks of them.

"Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake befove concerning Judas" (Acts i. 16). Here, we see the prediction concerning Judas, written centuries before. David was the instrument, but it was the Holy Ghost who spake. He foresaw with divine precision the treachery of one whose heart remained unmoved by association with our Lord. He would have it recorded long in advance, that it might be seen it was no chance which happened, but the permission of a well-known sin. David knew what it was to have a friend turn traitor; he had tasted something of the bitterness of that cup, but it was not simply of Ahithophel that he wrote,—"Yea mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me" (Ps. xli. 9). Our Lord quotes this as fulfilled in the treachery of Judas. He was admitted to the nearest confidences, entrusted with the "bag" and its little store.

David doubtless was conscious that he was describing more than the treachery of *his* friend, as we see from a quotation cited in the second chapter of Acts (vers. 30, 31), "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ." Thus we see that David was conscious that he was an instrument in the hands of the Spirit of God, to declare beforehand the purposes of God regarding Christ, both the permission of the wickedness that brought Him to the cross, and the grace that in that very way effected our redemption.

The expression quoted says, The Spirit by David; our next one reverses this, "David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on My right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calleth Him Lord" (Mark xii. 36, 37). I think there is a beautiful fitness here in this order, for it is David owning Christ's Lordship. So it is "David saith." But he speaks in or by the Spirit; he is led and guided by the Holy Spirit to declare the Lordship and glory of the Messiah.

Again we have David's own acknowledgement that he was but the instrument of the Spirit, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and His word was in my tongue" (2 Sam. xxiii. 2). Here again the immediate connection shows that it was concerning Christ that He spoke. All God's counsels center in Him. I do not mean to limit the inspiration to these direct predictions; far from it. Every word, whether for the individual or the nation, is always perfect. But Christ is the centre of God's thoughts, and it is the great work of the Spirit to point to Him.

Leaving David, we find the same statement as to the

prophets; "As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets which have been since the world began" (Luke i. 70). Whoever spoke for God was simply and only His mouthpiece. The human element in inspiration is simply God's making use of human instruments perfectly to convey His thoughts.

As to how He used them, we have been seeing a little. There was perfect naturalness. The Spirit spake by David; David spake in the Spirit. Look at the book of Psalms, and you will see how unconstrained were the instruments. You hear the "sighing of the prisoner," the sad confession of sin, the pleading for mercy, the humble gratitude for all blessings, the happy outbursts of praise for deliverance, and the joyful acclaim, in which all nature joins—"Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord." How varied the tones, and yet what perfect harmony. For the simple reason that every instrument is used by the Holy Spirit of God.

To me there is not only a charm in dwelling upon this side of the subject, but it seems to me to add to our thought of the sovereign power of the Holy Spirit. He uses free agents; He has them utter, in language appropriate to themselves, thoughts whose general meaning they grasp; they are affected by feelings natural to their position. And yet all is absolutely divine. The result is, we have a Book which is the wonder of the world, the comfort of the saints, and which unfolds the mind of God.

I need hardly refer to the divine wisdom and suitability of all this. This Book touches us at every point of our experience—sin, sorrow, trial; gratitude, joy, worship—every conceivable experience of the child of God, every condition of conscience-stricken guilt, is met here. It is met not with the dark outline of the picture merely, but that picture instinct with hope and with life. The Spirit of God is breathing through it all. I see myself pictured

not merely as a poor sinner groveling in the dust, but as such at the feet of infinite love, hot tears, given of God, telling out my shame and my sorrow, and sweetest fragrance telling out the grace and love of Him who meets me as I am. Oh, beloved, I bless—I praise God for this wondrous human-divine Book! I weep with Jeremiah, I exult with Isaiah; but in and with the weeping and the exultation I feel and know the calm of the Mighty One who is speaking for God in every word.

Such, in some partial way, is the thought of the human element—the instruments. In somewhat a similar way as when, fully persuaded of His deity, we are led out in fuller worship by a contemplation of our Lord's humanity, so when we have in our inmost souls bowed to God's perfect Word, we are refreshed and helped by looking at the human instruments He has been pleased to make use of. I commend this subject to your prayerful study.

We have now done with this side of our subject—the Holy Spirit in inspiration. We have dwelt upon the perfection of the Scripture, upon the purpose of the Spirit in giving it, and upon its adaptability to our use by the human instruments through whom He has spoken. We now pass to another branch of the subject, upon which we will dwell far more briefly—the enlightenment of the Spirit in the use of the Scriptures.

We have in our hands a perfect, an infallible Book. Every word has been inspired by the Holy Spirit. How are we to understand—to make use of it? Bearing in mind that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, we see that something more than mere natural intelligence is needed. You may know the languages accurately, be able to make nice distinctions in Greek particles and tenses, and yet be utterly in the dark as to the meaning of this Holy Word. A glance at many of the learned commentaries will illustrate this. History,

archæology, science are levied upon, and a wealth of side-light is thrown upon the narrative; but, alas! no sunlight. You will understand that I value the side-light, but only after I have the sunlight. We can thank God for everything in the way of geography and history that illustrates Scripture, but this is not illumination. Learning, I want to say distinctly, is not an enemy to the truth, but a servant. There are some devout students who realize this, and who bring all human knowledge to the feet of Jesus. Such men will be used of God.

It is under the plea of the need of a God-given interpreter that Rome has taken the Bible away from the common people. She says the Church alone can interpret Scripture, and that for the average Christian to attempt it will result in error. She points to the infidelity and manifold divisions of Protestantism as a justification of her stand.

Now I am not, of course, justifying Rome in taking away the key of knowledge; but does not the infidelity of much of that which professes to interpret Scripture—German rationalism, copied in England, Scotland and America—show where mere human learning will lead? I say as boldly as Rome, we *do* need a divine teacher to illuminate this Word for us; we are not competent to learn it by ourselves. Even where there is no rationalism, this free and independent handling of the word of God leads to all kinds of crude and unsound views and divergent opinions. We do need—we must have an infallible guide to explain to us what the Bible teaches. Who and where is he?

Rome says the Church teaches; the priest alone can expound Scripture; the popes, the councils and the fathers have settled its meaning. But if I turn to these sources of light, I find them utter darkness. Not only does the greatest confusion prevail—divergence of opinion

between fathers and councils and popes—but Rome has blotted out the simplest and most precious truths of the word of God. She has branded as damnable heresies the precious truths of justification by faith, the finished redemption of Christ, and of access into the very holiest by His blood, without priest or ritual. She has marred the Bible and insulted the Holy Spirit by incorporating the Apocrypha with the word of God, mixing human productions full of error with the divine. She has illustrated to the full the parable of the woman hiding the leaven in three measures of meal. Wherever the Church takes the place of teacher that is what she does—introduces error into the pure truth, and so corrupts all.

No, dear brethren, Rome offers no corrective for the error we all deplore. We need a God-given teacher—an infallible guide—to enable us to understand our Bibles. Who is he? The Holy Spirit. The Author of the Book is its expounder. How precious, and how like the grace of God that this should be!

Let me illustrate. Two disciples of Jesus were on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus. The shadow of the cross, unrelieved even by a hope of the resurrection, hung darkly over their path. Their faith only manifested itself in a sorrow well nigh hopeless.

And yet these men had not only the Scriptures, but the predictions of our Lord as to His death and resurrection. But "as yet they knew not the Scriptures that He must rise from the dead." Jesus is already risen, and is about to manifest Himself to them; but first of all He will give Scripture its proper place, and illuminate its pages for them. Before they can see Him they must understand the Scriptures.

His theme is, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" Beginning at the beginning, with Moses, "He expounded unto them

in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." Of that wondrous exposition we have no record save its effect upon these cold-hearted disciples. "Did not our heart burn within us, while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures?" (Luke xxiv. 25–32). Do you wish you had been there to have heard? Ah, brethren, though Jesus has gone on high, He has sent His representative to carry on this very work of unfolding the meaning of the Scriptures. It was said of our Lord, "Then opened He their understandings that they might understand the Scriptures"; and in close connection with that, He gave the promise of the Spirit (see Luke xxiv. 45, 49). He carries on this work of unfolding the word of God, of which our Lord has given samples. Remembering, too, our Lord's words, "it is expedient for you that I go away," we can safely say this work of the Spirit in enlightening our minds and guiding us into all truth is more effectual even than if our Lord had continued here as expounder, and for the simple reason that He was external and expounded *to* them, while the Spirit is within, and acts directly upon the mind.

We see, in Peter's discourse and the general testimony all through the Acts, that the Spirit was illuminating the Old Testament Scriptures. Here, at the beginning, we have this illumination in connection with inspiration, as showing God's gracious provision for founding His Church. But you can see that this illumination was not to be confined to these inspired men, but was and is the common privilege of all saints.

Just as in our Lord's parables, He does not explain all, but gives sample explanations of a few, in order that, by exercise and diligent search, under the guidance of the Spirit, the others might be understood also; so the use made of Old Testament Scripture by inspired men is to

serve as a model for all saints, who, in dependence upon the Spirit, study the Word.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of this illumination. Without it the Bible is a closed book practically, with little to charm the reader, because of his inability to grasp its meaning; with it the pages of Scripture become luminous, and its beauties grow upon us as, with wonder, we explore its exhaustless treasures. Instead of taking it up as a duty and reading the appointed chapter with little profit, we find it difficult to lay the Book down. No romance could so attract—no human production could so absorb. To what is this secret due? To the holy light that shines upon its truths and into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

Beware, dear brethren, of handling this Book in a coldly intellectual way—of reading and studying it in reliance upon your own wisdom. Remember the words of the apostle, which apply as truly to the natural mind in the saint as to the sinner: "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit. . . . But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, *because they are spiritually discerned*" (1 Cor. 9, 10, 14).

Spiritual discernment of what is revealed is the result of the Spirit's illumination. Without this, not even its inspiration could make the truths of God's word known. How completely dependent are we, then, upon the Holy Spirit. In the chapter from which I have just quoted we are told that the truths of God are revealed by the Spirit, communicated by the Spirit, and received in the power of the Spirit.

This enlightenment of the Spirit enables us not merely

to understand detached texts and portions of God's truth —not merely to have clear views upon certain doctrines —but to gain familiarity with the entire Book; to fall into the current of its thoughts—all, in fact, suggested by the words, "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15).

I have already dwelt a little upon the purpose of God, as unfolded in His word. This enlightenment of the Spirit will enable us to understand and trace out that purpose. We will see the development of God's ways with Israel and His counsels as to His earthly people; we will see how blessing is coming to all the nations of the earth in connection with Israel. We will learn that the Church, the body and future heavenly bride of Christ, is entirely distinct from the earthly people. We will fall into the current of prophetic teaching, and that which to most is a confused mass of well nigh contradictory statements will become luminous.

Under this divine enlightenment, we will trace the wondrous truths of God's word, from the germs in the earliest books on to the full fruitage in the life of our Lord and distinct statement of the epistles. We will take up the types of Scripture, and find an absorbing delight in discovering the secrets which God has hidden for us. What shall I say? The enlightenment of the Spirit puts us in a new world—the world of divine realities—and the things of this present world seem small in comparison. As a result, practical sanctification is secured. A man whose whole life is spent in the realities of divine things is likely to be transformed by them.

But this brings us to our last subject, which I have called prophecy. You will understand that I do not refer here to what is ordinarily termed that, whether prediction or any divine oracle. I use the term now as we find it in the fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians: "Ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all be com-

forted." "He that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation and comfort" (verses 4, 31). This is the special *application* by the Spirit of God of truth suited to the special need of the saints. The principle is evident, and we can apply it to the entire body of Scripture.

We have a perfect Word, and have been enlightened to understand it; but we still need to have it applied to mind and heart and life. The word in season is the word of prophecy. Let me illustrate: The account of Abraham and Hagar is divinely inspired; it is a perfect revelation of God's thoughts upon a certain theme. Further, we have been enlightened to get the meaning of the narrative; we see the two covenants of law and grace, the futility of nature's efforts, the power of God in linking us with the heavenly city, and so on. We see it, and are able to talk clearly about it all. But we need to have the Word brought home to our need. Are *we* carnal, seeking nature's strength for God's things? Are we legal, turning again to the "weak and beggarly elements" of a carnal commandment? Then the Spirit of God would apply to our conscience the truth He had made us see, and the result would be our practical deliverance.

We are to be not merely students of the Word, but obedient to it. This is effected by allowing the Spirit to apply it. There is nothing more deadening than to be engaged with truth without its acting upon the conscience. To traffic in the holy things of God for mere pleasure or worldly profit is awful to think of. Even where this extreme is not reached, we all need to remember that it is a solemn thing to have to do with God, and to have conscience open that the Spirit may make practical what we have been learning.

I need hardly add that this ministry in the power of the Spirit is distinct from inspiration. This is ignored

by some, who thus put on the same level the sayings of uninspired men and the revelations of the Spirit of God. I believe Scripture itself corrects this by giving us an example where we have side by side the inspired Word and the word of prophecy. It is all the more remarkable because both utterances are from the same person and at the same time. I refer to the seventh chapter of First Corinthians.

I will quote first a few passages in which the apostle clearly disclaims absolute divine authority for what he says: "But I speak this by permission, not by commandment" (verse 6); "Now concerning virgins, I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful" (verse 25). "But she is happier if she so abide, after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God" (verse 40).

Compare with this, in the same Scripture, the following statement: "And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from the husband" (verse 10). Passing back again, "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord" (verse 12).

Here, then, we have, in divine wisdom recorded in God's word, side by side, infallible commands and the judgment of a spiritual man. When it is the Lord speaking, the apostle tells us, and distinguishes this from his own judgment. And yet he spoke as a man guided by the Spirit. It is this last general guidance by the Spirit for our profit and edification that is the prophecy that always abides in the Church. Inspiration has ceased, because the word of God is complete, and there is no further need for it. But there is constant and daily need for this practical speaking by the Spirit of a word in season.

There are those, doubtless, who have a special gift as

exhorters—men who know what is the need, and apply the word of God to that need. The "word of wisdom" would seem to be of this character.

Then, too, the blessed Spirit speaks to us in private, in our own reading of Scripture, or by bringing to our recollection just the word needed for our help—doctrine, reproof or correction. Let us see to it that we ever read God's word with the desire that it should search us. This is the application of the water to our feet, that we may abide in holy fellowship with the Lord (see John xiii.) In a similar way we find the Scriptures are the weapon of offence in all spiritual conflict. In the familiar passage in the sixth chapter of Ephesians, after enumerating the various parts of the defensive armor—girdle, sandals, breastplate, shield, and helmet—the apostle adds, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." A closer rendering would doubtless be, "the *sayings* of God." This would suggest the word for the occasion, as when our Lord met and overcame Satan by the suited word. What a comfort it is to know that the Spirit is ever ready to give us the word we ought to speak, in all conflicts with the adversary, whatever may be the form in which he may appear! How many well-meaning efforts to contend for the truth fail because the wrong weapon is used! Instead of using with perfect confidence the divinely appointed weapon, resort is had to human arguments and methods, too often with disastrous results.

Notice, it must be the proper portion, the saying that is applicable to the need. How much exercise this means; how much previous study of scripture, and what dependence upon God. May we learn to be not unskillful users of the word of righteousness. There is no weapon like that, and with it the weak and ignorant may confound the wisest.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is

profitable." Is it so to us? Are we becoming sanctified by the truth? There is one proof—obedience. "If a man love me, he will keep my word." Obedience, dear brethren, is that to which we are called. Of what avail is knowledge, and even miraculous power, if obedience to God's holy will in love is not our daily practice? The Lord lay this upon all our hearts.

Thus we have reached, in our way, the end we had put before us. We have seen the Holy Spirit as Author of the Scriptures, giving us an infallibly perfect Book; we next dwelt upon His enlightenment of our minds in opening up the contents of this wondrous Book; and, lastly, we have glanced at His work of applying to heart and conscience that Word, that it might be assimilated in our lives.

How complete and how varied is His work in connection with the Scriptures! Is anything lacking? Could we ask or desire more? Surely we can say we are not straitened in Him, but only in ourselves. It is the narrow heart, full of its own thoughts and its own will, that "limits the Holy One."

May He, the Author of God's perfect word, be unhindered in His work of opening its beauties to our gaze and of applying its truths to our conscience.

"FATHER, we own Thy sov'reign claim,
And bless Thy Son's most precious name,
Whom Thou for us hast given;
Who bore the curse to sinners due,
Quickened our ruined souls anew,
And made us heirs of heaven.

'Tis by the Holy Ghost alone
That Christ, the Lord, is made our own,
The gift of grace divine:
But since to us, in His blest face,
There shines the glory of Thy grace,
We know that we are Thine.

Oh, while we here together join,
Before the throne of grace divine,
  Bow down a Father's ear;
Our hearts have listened to Thy Word,
Thy name we praise with glad accord,
  Reveal Thyself as near."

LECTURE VII

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRIST

BEFORE HIS INCARNATION; DURING HIS EARTHLY LIFE THE PRESENT DISPENSATION; THE COMING OF THE LORD

"COME, let us sing the matchless worth,
And sweetly sound the glories forth,
Which in the Saviour shine:
To God and Christ our our praises bring:
The song with which high heaven will ring,
"Praises for grace divine."

How rich the precious blood He spilt?
Our ransom from the dreadful guilt
Of sin against our God;
How perfect is the righteousness,
In which unspetted beauteous dress
His saints have ever stood!

How rich the character He bears,
And all the form of love He wears,
Exalted on the throne!
In songs of sweet untiring praise,
We e'er would sing His perfect ways,
And make His glories known.

And soon the happy day shall come
When we shall reach our destined home
And see Him face to face;
Then with our Saviour, Lord, and Friend
The one unbroken day we'll spend
In singing still His grace."

IT IS the special beauty of the truth of God that it never leaves us satisfied with *itself*, but brings us to know and enjoy a Person. Thus, without any special premeditation, I find that our closing lecture is appropriately upon the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the blessed Son of God. And I am sure that this is the desire of the

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Spirit. His work here is expressed in one sentence, "He shall glorify me." He does not merely enlighten us, but He introduces—may I say?—us to One in whose company we shall spend eternity.

I think it fitting, too, that our present subject should follow the previous one. All the perfections of the written Word are to exhibit those of the Personal Word. The Scriptures have Christ for their theme, and in all enlightenment and all application to heart and conscience this is ever before the Spirit—to glorify Christ.

How suggestive is the thought—in itself what a model does it put before us! The blessed Jesus humbled Himself, walking in all lowliness from the manger to the cross, bearing His own cross at the last; but it is the delight of the Spirit to unfold the glories which the Lord veiled, to make Him pre-eminent who emptied Himself. And so, as led of the Spirit, our one thought in all ministry is to exalt Christ—our one business to learn more of Him.

Indeed, as you will see, all our previous subjects converge here. I will briefly run over what has been before us from the beginning to show this.

Our first subject was, The Holy Spirit in the Dispensations, and these we divided into the three general ones, before Christ, the present or Christian age, and the Millennium. The Spirit's work prior to our Lord's first coming was necessarily one of preparation—preparation for Christ. During the present age, while our Lord is exalted, His work is to make us realize the fulness there is in Him. In the Millennium, when our Lord will be manifested as King over all the earth, His word will be one of open and manifest blessing. Thus the Spirit reflects the thoughts of God as to Christ in each age of the world's history.

We see the same in what occupied us next—The Holy Spirit in Salvation. Conviction of sin, we saw, was be-

cause of the world's rejection of Christ. New birth was marked by faith in the Lord Jesus. Sealing was upon that faith; was simply the record of God's appreciation of those who believe. Sealing is never connected with attainments or experiences; never made to depend upon ths extent of our knowledge of truth. Where there is faith in the Person, there God sets His seal of ownership upon the weakest and most ignorant believer. Assurance is simply bringing home to the soul the perfection of Christ's work and His love. Thus in salvation the Spirit glorifies Christ.

The same is true in the sanctification of the believer. We find that the Spirit comes as the representative of our absent Lord. He takes up His abode in us, leads our hearts out to share the thoughts of God as to Christ, sets us apart as belonging to Him, and enables us to walk as glorifying Him. Here, again, it is Christ whom the Spirit exalts.

In all Church truth the Spirit gives the Headship to Christ. In baptism He puts us into the Body of which Christ is Head; the unity of the Spirit is to make practical the unity of the Body; the gifts of the Spirit are from Christ in glory, administered down here; worship is exclusively to the Father and the Son.

I might repeat the same in what occupied us next—The Spirit for Power. Paul calls it "the power of Christ," and connects it, as we saw, with the risen and ascended Lord. And we have just noted the connection between the Scriptures and Him who is called the Word.

So it is no exaggeration to say that the one work of the Spirit in every connection is to present Christ before us —to magnify Him in our eyes, in order that our lives may be conformed to Him and the praise of heaven be anticipated.

It is my purpose to-night to trace out, with the Spirit's

help, some of the more manifest relations between Himself and our Lord Jesus, and, for convenience of arrangement, I will arrange what I have to say chronologically. We will look first at the Spirit and Christ before His incarnation; secondly, during His life upon earth; thirdly, during the present dispensation; and lastly, the outlook into the future.

There is a striking Scripture that illustrates this intimate relation prior to our Lord's coming to earth. "Quickened by the Spirit: by which also He [Christ] went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a-preparing" (1 Pet. iii. 18—20). This passage has been greatly misunderstood, and even where it was not used to teach error, its true force does not seem to have been apprehended.

It has been thought to refer to what was done by our Lord after His death: that He descended into the unseen world, and there "in spirit," in His disembodied state, preached the gospel to the spirits in prison. Apart from its grossness, such a thought is not only utterly foreign to the Scriptures, but serves as an apparent basis for the doctrine of purgatory and future probation, which, I need hardly say, are most dangerous errors.

All, however, is clear when we see the true meaning. The people of God are in the midst of all forms of persecution and suffering, subjected to the mockery of an evil and thoughtless age, just as Noah had to listen to the scoffers in his day; as our Lord, too, suffered, not merely this persecution, but *for sins, too.* That suggests the cross, the only place where He suffered for sins, and His death. He died, as to His earthly relationships—as to His humanity. This is the meaning of "in the flesh." He died as man. But he was quickened in the power of

the Spirit, and is alive forevermore. The apostle returns to his theme, the sufferings of the Lord's people in a mocking age. It has ever been the same. In Noah's day there were the scoffers; but Christ went, in that day, and preached by the Spirit—the same Spirit in or through whom He was quickened. He is present with us now, just as He was present in Noah's day—by the Holy Spirit, who represents Him. The Spirit spoke in Noah; He speaks through His instruments now, and it is Christ speaking in both cases by the Spirit.

Noah's case is cited as being at the close of a time of forbearing, and just preceding the judgment. "The world that then was" answers to the world that now is. (See 2 Pet. ii. 6, 7). What happened in his day will finally happen with the world. The men who heard Christ preaching through the Spirit in Noah are now in prison. They heard the preaching and rejected it. So will it be in a day soon coming. Therefore, let the suffering saints be steadfast; they are part of a great testimony of Christ which the Spirit of God has been presenting from the beginning. Rejectors will soon see their folly; meanwhile let Christ's example be before us. Let us suffer for righteousness, He having once for all suffered for sins.

But it was not merely to explain a passage that has been misunderstood that I have quoted this Scripture, but to show the relation between the Holy Spirit and Christ in all time. Christ went, in the Spirit, in the days of Noah, and preached to the men whose spirits are now in prison. The Spirit was His representative and executor.

The same apostle, you will remember, speaks of the Holy Spirit in prophecy as "the Spirit of Christ" (1 Pet. i. 11). We have already examined this passage, but I want you now to notice the expression, "the Spirit of Christ." A vast amount of Old Testament Scripture is

what is called "Messianic"; it refers to the Messiah, or Christ. The Holy Spirit spoke in the prophets, and He spoke for, and, in very many cases, *as* Christ. That is, we have not merely the inspired predictions as to the sufferings and future glories of our Lord, but you have these sufferings, as it were, made visible and present. It is the Spirit of Christ who speaks, the Holy Spirit bringing Christ vividly before us. But illustration will make this plainer.

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Ps. xxii. 1). These are our Lord's own words on the cross, centuries later, and the entire Psalm evidently refers to what Peter has called "the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow." But you notice it is Christ Himself who is speaking all through that Psalm, not merely the Spirit. We hear *His* cry of anguish; we see "the assembly of the wicked" enclosing Him, and hear their taunts: "He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him; let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him." All is vivid, personal, real. We see Him delivered, at the moment of extreme forsaking, from the horns of the unicorn, and we hear His song of triumph. It is Christ, I say, who is speaking. But it is the Spirit who makes such a wonder possible.

This is but one case. Turn to the 16th Psalm. We hear a voice—a familiar voice of love, dependence and obedience. "Preserve me, O God, for in thee do I trust." We see Him walking His lonely, separate path, associating with a feeble remnant, whom He calls "the saints that are in the earth, and the excellent in whom is all my delight." We follow Him, as, with perfect satisfaction in Jehovah as His portion, He faces even death, in the confidence that the "path of life" lies through it, and that God will not suffer His "Holy One to see corruption," but will bring Him into His presence with fulness of joy.

Now, this is not David, save as the instrument of the Holy Spirit. It is Christ Himself presented as speaking, through the divine power of that Spirit who sees the end from the beginning.

And so I might go on, quoting one Psalm after another to show not mere inspiration, but, if I may so speak, impersonation. It is a wonderful subject, to trace Christ speaking throughout the Psalms by the Spirit. You will find this, manifestly in such Psalms as the 40th, 69th, 109th. In the 40th we see Him as the burnt offering, raised up from the dead; in the 69th, as the trespass offering, suffering for wrong not His own; in the 109th, He is suffering at man's hands. There are many other instances of the same, both in entire Psalms, as the 17th and 18th, or in smaller portions. Besides these, there are the other Messianic Psalms, to which I do not now refer, as the 2d, 8th, 45th, 110th, where Christ is not entirely the speaker, but the subject.

We have thus a mass of material in illustration of what is suggested by this expression, "the Spirit of Christ." We find the Holy Spirit so closely and intimately identified with what our blessed Lord was to do and be when here upon earth that He anticipated these things. His purpose was so to present it that not merely should a correct prediction be given, but the setting as well, in which all that occurred should be presented.

I feel at a loss to express this as I would like. I shrink from using language too human, lest it should seem like an irreverent intrusion into divine mysteries. And yet in a spirit of childlike confidence we may make use of what is revealed.

Does it not show that all God the Father's counsels centered about His Son—that all the Spirit's work was to exhibit Christ? What ineffable love between the divine Persons of the Holy Trinity! We can at least

worship as we bow our hearts. We tread His courts with unshod feet and chastened thoughts, but we dare not refuse the thoughts revealed by God Himself. "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" gives a glimpse of Godhead glory that seems to link closely with that word, "God is love."

But I pass to another line of truth—the Spirit and Christ, in His incarnation and during His earthly life. We will let Scripture speak to us. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that Holy Thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i. 35). Read also Matt. i. 20. From these Scriptures we learn that our adorable Lord's humanity was due to the power of God through the Holy Spirit. He came voluntarily, became flesh voluntarily, and here we see the share—may we say?—of Father, Son and Spirit in connection with His incarnation.

We pass on to His entrance into public life at His baptism, and here we see the Spirit anointing Him, not only for service, but as the Priest and sacrifice who was saying, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." I have already referred to these passages, and will not quote them again (Luke iii. 21, 22; Acts x. 28).

Everything our Lord did as man was in the power of the Holy Spirit. It was by Him our Lord cast out devils (Matt. xii. 28); through Him He offered or presented Himself without spot to God. His baptism and anointing set Him apart thus to God, to accomplish His will. Everything is in intimate connection with the Holy Spirit.

It is of great interest just here to notice how beautifully this is intimated in the type. In the meat—or, as the Revised Version renders it, meal—offering we have (in Leviticus ii. 5) cakes of fine flour, mingled with oil and anointed with oil. The fine flour is, as you know, a type

of our Lord's perfect humanity. It is, we might say, Christ's flesh—not in the sense, of course, of His body. The mingling with oil tells of what we have already seen, our Lord's miraculous nativity, by the power of the Spirit. The anointing with oil in like manner reminds us of our Lord's public recognition in the anointing of the Spirit at His baptism. The meat offering was both mingled and anointed with oil.

What absolute perfection all this suggests in the perfect Man. How opposite to the natural man, who was completely estranged from the only source of power. How completely, too, it disposes of that blasphemous suggestion —sometimes made in ignorance, but none the less blasphemy—that our Lord was capable of sinning. It reminds one of the Pharisees suggesting that our Lord wrought His miracles through the power of Satan. Could the Holy Spirit commit sin—yield to temptation? God forgive those who make the suggestion, and purify our minds from any such unholy speculation.

But, returning to the descent of the Spirit upon our Lord at His baptism, we have what I will call your attention to again, for it is most striking. I mean the form in which the Spirit appeared. He descended in bodily shape like a dove. The symbolism here is simple and clear. The dove was the bird used in sacrifice—"two turtle doves." It is also the bird of love—"My love, my dove," as in the Song of Solomon. With equal clearness, it is the bird of sorrow—"We mourned sore as doves." Sacrifice, love, sorrow—these the dove symbolized. But why, then, is the dove used as a type of the Spirit?

It only shows the beautiful accord of all Scripture. The Spirit has ever presented Christ, and not Himself.

He would show us who the One is, marked out in this wondrous way. He is the sacrifice, whose love brought Him down from heaven, and whose sorrow over man's

sin made Him a mourner. In looking at the dove we do not think so much of the Spirit as we do of Christ. "He shall glorify me."

Another type shows the link with our Lord's death. In the familiar passage describing the cleansing of the leper (Lev. xiv), we have the ceremonial preliminary to his reception into the camp. The priest was to take two birds, and kill one in an earthen vessel over running water. The bird of heaven speaks of Christ, who came down from heaven; the earthen vessel speaks of the prepared body, His incarnation; the running or living water reminds us, as we have frequently seen, of the word of God as used by the Holy Spirit. You will remember we spoke of our Lord's determination to fulfill the least scripture prediction concerning His death, and how thus He spoke of His thirst. The passage we are looking at embodies this thought. In His death, the Holy Spirit was united with Himself in carrying out every particular that had been foretold. Thus the Spirit was with Him up to that awful moment when, forsaken of God, He entered alone into the darkness of wrath, drinking the last bitter dregs of the cup of wrath deserved by us.

The Spirit was the agent in His resurrection, as we have been reading, He was quickened in or by the Spirit. So also it was through the Holy Ghost that He gives special instructions and commands to His disciples *after* His resurrection (Acts i. 2). This is most interesting and remarkable. The Spirit was with the risen Lord as well as before His death, which seems to suggest that unhindered and unreserved divine fellowship which shall exist for all eternity, not only between the persons of the Godhead, but—blessed be His name—with all the redeemed as well.

Thus we can trace the link of the Spirit with our Lord all through His earthly life — His conception, baptism,

anointing, sacrificial death, and His resurrection. What perfect and holy intimacy. And what privileges it suggests for those who have in infinite grace been born again, baptized, indwelt, and anointed by this same Spirit.

But we pass on now to the present dispensation—the dispensation of the Spirit, and to this our Lord's words just quoted particularly apply. We find that it is still Christ, none but Christ who is presented as the object. Look at Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost; what is the theme? not primarily the Holy Spirit, but *Christ.* It was Christ they had rejected, Christ, God had exalted, Christ through whom forgiveness of sins and every other blessing was offered. Is it not wonderfully simple?

The same is true all through the Acts, and all through the epistles, the one commanding theme, presented in all the energy and power of the Holy Spirit, is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is Christ in glory now, at God's right hand—the heavens opened for faith and the way into the Holiest manifest. But Christ is all.

Another type illustrates this strikingly. We had occasion at the beginning to remark the superintendence of the Spirit over the construction of the Tabernacle. The Tabernacle is, I need not say, typical throughout, and in every way of the Person and work of Christ. I do not here speak of curtains and boards and those parts not directly connected with our theme.

Let us look at the candlestick. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto Aaron, and say unto him, When thou lightest the lamp, the seven lamps shall give light over against the candlestick. . . . And this work of the candlestick was of beaten gold; unto the shaft thereof, unto the flowers thereof, was beaten work: according unto the pattern which the Lord had showed Moses" (Num. viii. 1–4).

All are agreed that the light, supported by the oil, is a

type of the Holy Spirit. But of what or whom is the candlestick a type? Gold is a figure of divine glory, the seven branches, of divine perfection. But you will remember that these branches were formed by representations of the buds and blossoms of the almond-tree. This tree was the first to bloom in the spring; its name is a reminder of this, "the hastener." Further Aaron's rod that budded and bore blossoms and fruit was an almond-rod.

All this is beautifully typical of our Lord in resurrection-glory. He in His resurrection is the antitype of Aaron's rod, and thus proves His exclusive right to the everlasting priesthood, "not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life" (Heb. vii. 16). The candlestick thus tells of the glory of a risen and ascended Christ, the Son of God.

This accords with all that we have heretofore seen of the Spirit's work. We look at the passage I have just read from the eighth of Numbers. The lights—the Holy Spirit—were to give light over against the candlestick—the perfections of Christ risen. In other words the one distinct work of the Spirit is thus to exhibit the perfections and glories of Christ.

You will find that thought all through the tabernacle. There was no other light there but the light from the candlestick, and under its beams all the glories of the sanctuary were visible. For us, blessed be God, holy place and most holy, are one—the light that illumines our sanctuary shows the way into the holiest of all made manifest. It is by the Holy Spirit we recognize how true all is for faith. "Through Him (Christ) we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."

But think, dear brethren, of the absorbing interest of the Spirit in presenting Christ and His glories for the worship of faith. The soft light from the candlestick

brings into lovely and harmonious view, not only the beauties of the light stand, but of altar and table as well. Christ is glorified.

I am reminded of how this connects with the passage in 2 Cor. iii. The apostle is there describing the "ministry of the Spirit," in contrast with that of law—death, and condemnation. He declares that under this ministry, he can use great plainness, in contrast with Moses who was obliged to conceal the glory of his countenance from the children of Israel. We on the contrary, have an object before us, who has no veil on His face, and in that face we see the glory of God. It is a glorified Christ, whom the Spirit presents! No wonder there is great plainness of speech. No wonder there is liberty. Ah, "we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor."

But there is more than this: we behold this unveiled glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Lord the Spirit." Occupation by the Spirit with the glories of Christ, has a transforming, sanctifying effect. We are changed into the same image. Think of that, ye followers after "perfect sanctification." Do you desire the Spirit's way of holiness? Let Him unfold before your gaze the beauties of a risen Christ. He will not occupy you with yourselves save to make you abhor and loathe yourselves, but with the "chiefest among ten thousand." And as you gaze, the image of that One will be taken in your heart, you will be transformed into the same image.

There is another way in which we can see this relation of the Spirit and Christ connected, yet somewhat in contrast with what we have just been looking at. It too is a type. "And it came to pass that at even the quails came up and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness

there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. . . . And when the sun waxed hot, it melted" (Ex. xvi. 13, 14, 21).

Dew, moisture, is a reminder of the freshness of the Spirit. The manna, I need not say, is Christ, the bread of God from heaven, to be our food. It is Christ come down, Christ in all the circumstances of an earthly life, to sustain the life of His people. It is connected with the quails, who, in their death for man's food, suggest Christ's flesh and blood. (See John vi.) Here then we have, not a Christ in glory, but a Christ humbled—all that is in His blessed person to support and nourish us during our wilderness journey.

But, you will notice, it was in connection with the dew that the manna came. It is the Holy Spirit who makes Christ our food; and may there not be fitness in the withdrawal of the dew that the manna may be seen? The Spirit ever presents Christ and none but Him. However the same causes which removed the dew, caused the manna to melt. The sun of this world soon drives away, so far as our enjoyment is concerned, that which should be our food.

But you notice again how the Spirit is linked with our blessed Lord. Is Christ the food of your soul? is He precious? Then you know to Whose gracious ministry this is due. "He shall take of mine and show it unto you." May the blessed Spirit be unhindered in His holy work of feeding our souls with the things of Christ. I might remark in passing that the word of God is the treasure house of all this wealth. The Spirit uses that to bring home to our hearts the things of Christ.

Once more, let us note a ministry of the Spirit in connection with Christ in this dispensation. We have seen Him showing us the beauties of Christ where He now is; we have also seen Him feeding our souls with the manna

down here. There is another thought: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost" (1 Cor. xii. 3). Here we have the Lordship of Christ emphasized. As He has His place at the right hand of God, so the Spirit never rests till Christ is enthroned in the heart of the saint.

You notice the title, "Lord." It is one thing to know the Lord Jesus as Saviour, as the one who has borne my sins in His body on the cross, it is quite another to enter fully into the fact that He is Lord. We may dwell with comfort upon the fact that He is our great High Priest, sustaining us and sympathizing with us; we may revel in all that He is for us—every child of God does, in measure. But, beloved brethren, do we say, and mean in the depths of our souls, "*Lord* Jesus"?

"Lord" means master, sovereign owner, One whose right it is to give His word, and it is ours to obey. Ah, He has served us, He lives now to serve our needs, but He claims, yea the Holy Spirit claims for Him, absolute, implicit, unwavering obedience.

Let us dwell for a moment upon this most important point. We are not the center of God's counsels—Christ is. He has made Him both Lord and Christ. When He highly exalted His Son, and gave Him a name above every name, it was that every knee should bow to that name, own that sovereign authority.

We are called and chosen through the work of the Spirit, and the sprinkled blood,—See 1 Pet. i. 2—to a life of obedience. Let us mark it well, *obedience* is that to which we are called. "As obedient children," says the same apostle. What is more painful than to see a disobedient child. And you will notice that this disobedience does not come out boldly and refuse some positive command, but inserts its own will in the place of the parent's. The child uses its own judgment, it does not think there

is any harm in thinking or doing according to its own judgment, and the result is, the parent's will is ignored and despised. Is not that a worse form of disobedience than if the child absolutely refused to obey? Perhaps that refusal would bring a correction that would recover the child, while the gradual substitution of its own judgment for the parent's, saps the whole foundation of family government.

So is it in the things of God. There is a gradual substitution of man's thoughts and opinions for the simple, "thus said the Lord." The result is not merely that there is this or that command ignored, but human thought and human will substituted for the will of God. Therefore the Spirit of God ever leads to the recognition of the sovereignty of Christ.

I need not say this Lordship applies to every department of the life, individual and corporate. Nothing is too trivial to ignore His mind in, and nothing in which He has not His desires for us. Let us pause here, dear brethren, and ask ourselves how far we are seeking to be "obedient in all things." How much that now occupies us would be dropped, how many paths now walked in would be forsaken, how many duties now neglected would be taken up, did this one word, obedience, describe us.

You will notice that the Lordship of Christ is referred to in that chapter which is devoted to the constitution of the Church. We all own Christ as *Head* of the Church, do we own Him as *Lord* of the Church? If so we will be as ready in church matters to refuse what is contrary to His will, and to follow what is according to His will, as in private life. Every provision of His word, such as we went into when looking at what is known as Church truth, is absolutely binding upon every one who names the name of the Lord. May the Holy Spirit be unhindered in pressing this upon the conscience of each of us.

We have thus seen that Christ Himself is ever the theme of the Spirit—showing us His glory, feeding us with Him, leading us to own Him Lord. "Christ is all." We come now to the close of a ministry which has occupied us thus far, and we ask what remains? what does the Spirit set before us as to the future? Is He as clear in pointing us forward to Christ? Ah yes, His ministry is ever the same, it is Christ all through, Christ as His people's one hope.

It is not for us now to take up what is known as prophetic truth. I take it for granted that you accept what is known as the premillennial coming—that Christ will come for His Church before beginning the judgments which are to usher in the thousand years of peace. What I want to do to-night is to show how the Spirit of God ever engages us with the coming of our Lord.

Look at the young converts at Thessalonica, with scarcely more than a few weeks' instruction; they were taught "to wait for God's Son from heaven, even Jesus" (1 Thess. i. 10). Their future prospects were all connected with that event, with that Person. They were not waiting for judgments, surely not for improvements in this world, but were waiting for a living, loving Person.

Who taught them thus to wait, who sustained them in this hope? "For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith" (Gal. v. 5). Righteousnes by faith is the theme of Paul. As Justification it is the present possession of every believer. But there is a hope connected with it—a hope that is attached to it. We *have* justification as a present blessing; we do not hope for *that*. But we are in the midst of a groaning creation; we have not yet the inheritance for which we hope. "For what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for?" But the Holy Spirit sustains us in waiting patiently for the hope

attached to righteousness by faith, and that hope, we just saw, was the coming of God's Son from heaven.

This is a hope that maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost (Rom. v. 4, 5). God's love is now poured forth in our hearts by the Spirit. We know His love, are established in it, and thus, as John says, "love with us is made perfect." This gives confidence for the future, boldness in view of judgment, for it can have no terrors for those who are sheltered from it. We rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Thus the Spirit makes the future bright and attractive. Every earnest that He gives makes us but hunger for the fullness. All speaks of Christ, and what we know of Him here quickens the longing to see Him face to face.

Therefore, in beautiful accord with this desire, we have the longing expressed in words: "The Spirit and the Bride say come" (Rev. xxii. 17). Almost the last word in the book of inspiration is the cry of the Spirit.

But this verse has been strangely misunderstood and misapplied. It has been almost universally thought to be an invitation to the sinner to come to Christ. The term "Bride" would surely give a strong hint that this could not be. Whom would the *Bride* long for but the Bridegroom? So, too, when we see in the immediate connection our Lord's assurance, "Surely I come quickly," with the response of the Church, "Amen, even so come Lord Jesus," there can be no doubt as to the meaning of the words we are looking at.

But, in beautiful consistency with this, the gospel is again offered. The Bride is saying, "Come," but whoever heareth the gospel can add his voice to the others; it is only the unbelieving rejectors who have no desire for the coming of the Lord. Is there still a thirsty one who lingers? Let him come now, as the gloom settles into

blackest night. Let the call of the Bride for Her Lord mingle with the invitation to sinners to the very last: "And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

But I want you to notice the remarkable expression, "the Spirit *and* the Bride." Without doubt, as we have seen, the Spirit forms the desire in the hearts of the saints for Christ to come. But it is not here merely "the Spirit *in* the Bride," but a distinct longing on the part of the Spirit for that one event for which all things wait.

And this connects with what we have seen before, the closest intimacy, the divinest affections of the infinitely perfect persons of the Godhead. What is the desire of the Holy Ghost at this moment? *The coming of Christ.* What is the desire of every Spirit-taught saint? The longing, the yearning of the Spirit! His own personal desire! I confess, beloved, it is a revelation to me—one that should hush all imagination, but should awe our souls as we behold the love of the Spirit and His desire for Christ to be fully glorified.

With the Spirit and taught by Him, the Bride, the Church, for which Christ died, utters her longing. She is homesick, not merely for heaven, but for Him who has made it heaven for her. All her longings for holiness, for deliverance from a groaning creation, for the unity of His Church, for reunion with loved ones who have gone before, for a body freed from the sickness and weakness brought in by sin—all is focused in the longing for Himself. Even glory has no attraction, save as He is the centre of it. Even the "beauty not our own" in which we will be clad cannot win her heart from Him.

> **"The Bride eyes not her garment,**
> **But her dear Bridegroom's face."**

It is the One whom her soul loveth—tell her of nothing else. It is Himself she desires.

Could anything, beloved brethren, be more divinely simple and beautiful than the way this is set before us in the supper of our Lord? Christ is there personally, by the Spirit, and commemoratively in the bread and wine. We see Him in death working eternal redemption for us; but it is not primarily or chiefly of redemption blessings that we think as we linger in thought over Gethsemane and Calvary. No, it is Christ Himself the Spirit sets before us as we show His death, and every heart is melted into adoring worship as with Thomas we say, "My Lord and my God."

But "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death, till He come." As we look back on Calvary, we also look forward to His coming. How perfectly His grace has linked those two events together. He left nothing undone at the cross; nothing to be worked out in an interval before He could come; no work of purifying—of making us faithful, as rounding out His work. No, that work is so complete that nothing is left but to look and long for His coming.

> "See, the feast of love is spread;
> Drink the wine and eat the bread,
> Sweet memorials, till the Lord
> Call us round His heavenly board;
> Some from earth, from glory some—
> Waiting only "till He come."

I do not know that I could more fittingly close this evening, and the entire subject that has occupied us, than by giving you a glimpse of a lovely picture, with which many of you are already familiar. For you it will have added charm; for familiarity with divine truths should ever increase our love for them.

I mean the story of Isaac and Rebekah, as you have it in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis. Isaac is the centre of all—his father's endowment and counsels as to

his future; the servant's mission; the winning of Rebekah, and her journey to him, ending in the marriage. Isaac is the theme. We can go back further—to the sacrifice of this "only son whom thou lovest," and see the correspondence throughout.

God gave up the Son of His bosom to death, and raised Him up by His glory from the dead. He has "made Him heir of all things," having put all things into His hands and seated Him at His own right hand. But it is God's purpose that His Son should have a Bride—to be associated—amazing grace!—in the glory which, as Son of Man, He has gained. But He will not subject His Son again to ignominy and reproach; He shall not again come in lowliness to earth.

So the Spirit, as Messenger, is sent from heaven, where Christ is, to earth, to win for Him the Bride. I do not question that in Abraham's servant you have the Spirit as He operates through human instruments. You will notice how everything is provided from on high—raiment, jewels, camels—speaking, doubtless, of God's fullest provision for our meetness and endowment and home-bringing. It is from Isaac's kinsmen that the bride is to be selected. So it is from the whole family of the regenerate of all times that the Church—believers of this Christian dispensation—is taken. The meeting is left to the sovereignty of God, for every individual in the Church is "chosen in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world." It is at the well, a fresh type of the Spirit, and the word which He uses, that Rebekah is met, and it is there at the first interview she receives the present, which is a foretaste of all her future endowment.

I have always felt the correspondence between this scene at the well and that other in the fourth of John. Outwardly most unlike—the one a guilty sinner to be convicted of her sin and saved from it; the other a chaste virgin,

to be espoused to one husband. How dissimilar! And yet, dear brethren, is not our heart telling us that these two are one and the same? that this guilty sinner it is who, cleansed and renewed, is one day to be presented as the chaste bride of the Lamb? Oh, the wonder of grace! "Christ *loved* the Church and *gave* Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v. 25–27).

You notice the order here. Christ's love is the source, His sacrifice of Himself the ground upon which He could save her. As a result, he can sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of the Word—new birth and all else. All is to culminate in the glorious presentation to Himself of a bride who will be—

"Meet companion then for Jesus."

Such is grace, beloved brethren, grace shown to me and you. "What shall we say to these things?"

Tracing the picture further, we see the oneness of purpose of the messenger. Rebekah is made to declare her family, and he is made a guest at her home. He will not rest until he has declared his message and received the answer. Well is it for the instruments of the Spirit when they yield themselves to His—I was going to say—eager importunacy.

When all is settled and the earnest is given, there is no lingering on the part of the messenger. "Send me away to my master," is his word; and when they would detain him for a few days, he replies, "Hinder me not." Ah, brethren, the Spirit does not wish to be detained here; His word ever is "Hinder me not." Is something holding you here—some "harmless thing"—some dalliance with this world's pleasures? Ah, you are hindering

the Spirit of God. Think of it when you are tempted, Lot-like, to settle down here, or, like Demas, to depart from the path of testimony and service.

And so Rebekah sets out to go to one whom, having not seen, she loved. It was voluntary on her part. "Wilt thou go with this man?" she had been asked, and had replied, "I will go." She forsakes all for the one to whom she has been espoused.

Let us pause a moment and ask ourselves, how is it practically with us? Is all relinquished to go to meet Christ, and do our glad hearts reply "I will go" to the thought of setting our faces heavenward? The Lord grant it may be so with us.

Full provision for the way is made, not at her cost, and she can forget what is behind in the prospect that is before. Dreary wastes lie between the place she has left and her future home—a long journey—but she is carried by a power not her own, and doubtless the way is beguiled by her learning from her guide more and more of him to whom she goes. How simple it all is! The Spirit of God leading the willing heart on to meet the Lord.

And where are the thoughts of the heavenly Spouse? Has He forgotten her for whom He has sent? How could He?

> "There amid the songs of heaven,
> Sweeter to His ear
> Is the footfall through the desert,
> Drawing ever near."

He waits, he longs to see us. It is the time now of His patience, but what a joy it is to Him when our hearts are truly yearning to see Him!

But the time is not long, and soon the bride sees one walking in the fields whom her guide tells her is his master. It was the last act of this faithful servant ere giving

an account of all to say, "It is my master." What joy will it be to the Spirit of God, not merely to have told us of Christ all our pilgrim way here, but ere long to say to us, "This is He."

"Who is this that comes to meet me
On the desert way,
Like the morning star, foretelling
God's unclouded day?"

Oh, beloved brethren, what a meeting! What joy, what worship! Is it for this we are waiting and enduring the sufferings of the "little while"? What recompense! "The Lord Himself"; to behold Him, to be like Him, to be with Him. This is the end of all the Spirit's work. Blessed consummation! It is Christ first, and Christ last.

"Christ is *all*."

AMEN.

"LORD Jesus, come,
And take Thy rightful place
As Son of Man, of all the theme!
Come, Lord, to reign o'er all supreme,
Lord Jesus, come.

Lord, Jesus, come!
Crowned with many crowns—
The Crucified, the Lamb once slain,
To wash away sin's crimson stain,
Lord Jesus, come!

Lord Jesus, come,
And take Thy Father's gift—
The people by Thy cross made Thine,
The trophy of Thy Love divine!
Lord Jesus, come!

Spirit and Bride;
With longing voice, say, 'Come;'
Yea, Lord, Thy word from that bright home
Is, 'Surely, I will quickly come!'
E'en so, Lord, come."

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